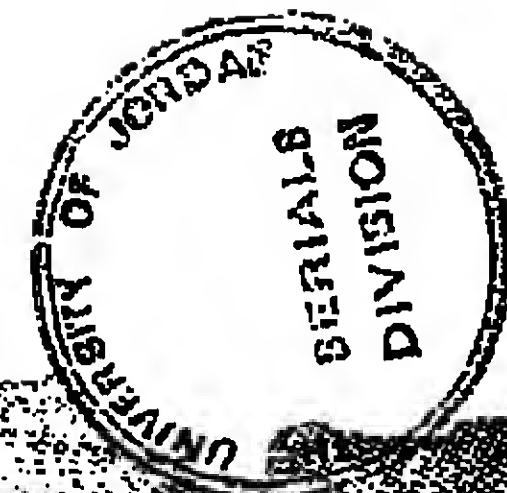


Gorbachev: World must follow through Madrid

SOUSTONS, France (R) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said Thursday the Madrid peace conference had broken the ice between Middle East foes but the international community must follow it up to ensure peace in the region. "The ice was broken, we hope it will be completely broken," he told reporters in southwest France on his way back from Madrid where he and U.S. President George Bush opened the talks. He said negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbours would take a long time. "The international community must react to new developments," he said. French President Francois Mitterrand, who hosted Mr. Gorbachev's 20-hour visit to France, said he had wanted the United Nations and its Security Council to play a bigger role in the conference co-sponsored by Washington and Moscow. "But since the conference is there, we must help it," he added. "We fully wish to see it succeed."

SPECIAL EDITION



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Israeli extremists held in Shamir's hotel

MADRID (R) — Spanish police arrested three Israeli extremists Thursday in Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's heavily-guarded Madrid hotel, the Interior Ministry said. The ministry said Benjamin Zeev Kahane, head of a militant anti-Arab group, Kahane Lives, and two members, were detained in the Husa Princess Hotel after holding a rowdy demonstration. Two of the detainees were staying in the downtown hotel near the royal palace where Mr. Shamir is leading Israel at historic Middle East peace talks. Police said the men, opposed to peace negotiations and advocates of expelling Arabs from the Israeli-occupied territories, were released after inquiries into the incident. Mr. Kahane formed a splinter group of the anti-Arab Kach faction founded by his father, rabbi Meir Kahane, shot dead in New York last November.

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Mideast presents its case in Madrid

Jordan: No peace without land and recognition of Palestinian rights
Israel: Talk of territorial compromise will undermine peace process
Syria: Every inch of Israeli-occupied Arab territory should be returned
Palestinians: Ours is a story of tortured land and proud yet captive people
Lebanon: Israeli occupation of southern strip is like the loss of a vital limb
Jordan seeks just peace — Abu Jaber

MADRID (AP) — Jordan's Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber Thursday urged the Israelis to relinquish occupied territories and the Arabs to end the radicalism that has marred their policies for decades.

Dr. Abu Jaber, speaking after Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir at the U.S.-arranged Middle East peace conference, urged the participants to work for "the dawn of a new era to rectify the mistakes of the past."

At a news conference held later, Dr. Abu Jaber rejected Mr. Shamir's request to hold the next phase of the peace process — bilateral talks — in the Middle East, including meetings in Israel.

"Why should we agree to move the venue?" he said. "The momentum in Madrid is good, the spirit in Madrid is good, and we should keep it here."

Arab delegations reject any step that would imply recognition of Israel, such as travelling there for meetings, unless there is already substantial progress towards peace accords and the return of occupied territories.

In his speech, he said Jordan's "quest for an honourable peace that would enable our peoples to tear down the walls of fear and hatred, as people tore down the Berlin Wall."

He argued emotionally that Arabs need feel no guilt for the historical sufferings of the Jewish people and had themselves paid a heavy and undeserved price for them.

"The world and the Israelis themselves know and are aware of our innocence of the crimes against the Jewish people," he said.

"God only knows the price we continue to pay for the sins of others," he said.

"Our land, our culture, our people, even our very souls, as well as everything we hold dear and sacred, continue to be plundered and distorted to accommodate new realities and manufactured facts, brutally created on the ground," Dr. Abu Jaber said in a clear reference to Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

The chief of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the conference referred to the Palestinians' quest for an independent state. He said the Palestinians "have a just cause which must be addressed and resolved with equity and fairness."

He stressed that "the Palestinians must be allowed to exercise their right of self-determination in their ancestral homeland." Responding to radical Israeli claims that Jordan was the Palestinians' homeland, he said: "Jordan has never been Palestine and will never be so."

Dr. Abu Jaber, a political science professor spoke for 30 minutes, the same length as Mr. Shamir's speech, although they had been allotted 45 minutes to present their case.

The surprise in Dr. Abu Jaber's speech was that he said:

(Continued from page 2)

Sharaa: No compromise over land with Israel

MADRID (Agencies) — Syria said Thursday that the Middle East peace conference offered a historic opportunity for a just peace in the region, but for it to succeed Israel must give up "every inch" of occupied territory.

Israel must also allow the Palestinians self-determination, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa told the delegates.

The harsh tone of the speech by Mr. Sharaa had been expected. Speaking of Israel, he said Syria would reject "any attempt to exploit the current peace process... or to obtain any gains, however small, which would reward the aggressor."

The comment appeared to reflect Syria's unwillingness to meet Israel in the Jewish state in bilateral talks or to even extend handshakes — any action that would offer even implicit recognition of Israel.

Mr. Sharaa said Israel's "intransigence" has placed the Middle East on the brink of war for decades, and he accused the Jewish state of being inhumane in its treatment of the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

He told the delegates at the Arab-Israeli peace conference: "It is no exaggeration to state that the continuing intransigence is a position which is bereft of any justification, is the one thing that places the world on the brink of incalculable dangers and prevents the region from enjoying peace."

Mr. Sharaa denied that Syria has been an aggressor in the 43-year-old conflict in its region. Mr. Sharaa said Syria was de-

fending others against aggression.

Mr. Sharaa, the last of the conference delegates to outline his country's vision for peace in the region, lashed out repeatedly at the Jewish state in a speech as hard hitting as an earlier address by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

He said Israel was not interested in implementing the United Nations land-for-peace resolution — the basis of the conference sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker says multilateral negotiations between Israel, its immediate Arab neighbours and other states in the Middle East on such matters as arms control, water, economic development, the environment and refugees would start within two weeks.

Mr. Sharaa said that Israel was only interested in the multilateral negotiations, and not in the bilateral talks focused on its occupation of Arab lands.

"It is only interested in entering negotiations with countries of the region on regional cooperation to legitimise its occupation of Arab territories, something which contradicts the objectives for which this conference was called," he said.

Mr. Sharaa said that Syria had come to the conference determined to work for a peaceful, just and comprehensive settlement "that would liberate our land, ensure the national rights of the Palestinian people and security

(Continued on page 3)



Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber, head of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation attending the Madrid Middle East peace conference, Thursday delivers Jordan's address at the meeting

Grim Israeli leader listens as Palestinians cry freedom

MADRID (Agencies) — The Palestinians mounted the world stage at a historic Middle East peace conference Thursday with an emotional plea to Israel for freedom and a state of their own.

After decades of exile, dispersal, war and occupation, a Palestinian leader was admitted to recount the misery of life under occupation as grim-faced Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir sat bristling in the glare of publicity.

"We, the people of Palestine, stand before you in the fullness of our pain, our pride and our anticipation for we have long harboured a yearning for peace and a dream of justice and freedom," said Haider Abdul Shafi.

"We seek neither an admission of guilt for the past nor vengeance for past inequities, but an act of will that will make peace a reality," Dr. Abdul Shafi said.

The Palestinian people are one, fused by centuries of history in Palestine, drawn together by a collective memory of shared sorrows and joys."

The physician spoke slowly

clearly before the other delegates in Spain's royal palace.

The head of the Palestinian delegation also dared the Israelis to walk out of the peace conference by invoking the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and its leader, Yasser Arafat.

Dr. Abdul Shafi, 72-year-old surgeon twice expelled by Israel from the occupied Gaza Strip, referred to the PLO's peace initiative of 1988, saying this proved the Palestinians' peaceful intentions.

Dr. Abdul Shafi said the Palestinians attending the U.S. arranged peace conference had been "denied the right to publicly acknowledge our loyalty to our leadership... but allegiance and loyalty cannot be censored or severed."

That leadership, he said, is "the symbol of our national unity and identity — the guardian of our past, the protector of our present, and the hope of our future," an indirect reference to the PLO which was excluded from the conference at Israel's insistence.

However, he later made an overt reference to the PLO, saying: "We, the Palestinian people, made the imaginative leap in the Palestine National Council of November 1988, during which the Palestine Liberation Organisation launched its peace initiative..."

Mr. Shamir sat grimly through the speech, sometimes fidgeting, and passed a note back to Deputy Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu seconds after the reference.

Dr. Abdul Shafi said the Palestinians will not settle for anything short of an independent state, but in the interim will accept autonomy in the territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 war.

"Christians, Muslims and Jews face the challenge of heralding a new era enshrined in global values of democracy, human rights, freedom, justice and security," he said.

The 40-minute address drew long applause from the Arab

(Continued from page 2)

Israel cites 'history' and says it wants to discuss more than land

MADRID (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir on Thursday urged his Arab foes to negotiate peace with the Jewish state, and said limiting the talks to territorial concessions would doom the peace process.

"We know our partners to the negotiations will make territorial demands on Israel," he said, but "it will be regrettable if the talks focus primarily and exclusively on territory. It is the quickest way to an impasse."

The Arab delegates are seeking the return of the territory occupied by Israel during the 1967 Middle East war. Syria, in particular, has indicated it might give the peace unless it regains sovereignty over the Golan Heights.

Mr. Shamir said his country felt "a hunger for peace," after decades of conflict.

"Wars have not solved anything in our region," said Mr. Shamir.

He used his speech to press the Arabs to conduct the Middle East peace conference's planned second phase, face-to-face separate talks between Israel and the

other delegations, in the Middle East.

"There is no better way to make peace than to talk in each other's home," he said. "We invite our partners to this process to come to Israel for the first round of talks. On our part, we are ready to go to Jordan, to Lebanon and to Syria for the same purpose."

The Arabs prefer to remain initially in Madrid, rather than immediately confer on Israel the recognition that would be implied by visits to the Jewish state.

Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber rejected Mr. Shamir's invitation, saying "there is a danger of disrupting the whole momentum of the conference and killing its spirit" if it is moved from Madrid.

Delegates have been unable to agree since the conference opened Wednesday on where to hold the bilateral talks, though an initial round is expected to begin Sunday in Madrid.

Mr. Shamir opened his speech with "shalom," the Hebrew greeting that also means "peace" and said "there will be obstacles,

problems, crises and conflicting claims. But it is better to talk than shed blood."

Nevertheless, Mr. Shamir made no new specific proposals on the many disputes between Israel and the opposing parties at peace conference.

On Wednesday evening, Mr. Shamir said Israel won't negotiate directly with Syria if Damascus continues to insist on U.S. and Soviet involvement in the talks' second phase.

The Syrians "don't want to have in their history such a chapter that there were negotiations between Syria and Israel, direct negotiations," the 76-year-old prime minister told U.S. public TV's MacNeil-Lehrer report.

He told Palestinians they could have joined Israel in negotiations long ago had they accepted the 1978 Israeli-Egyptian Camp David peace accords envisaging Arab self-rule in the occupied lands pending a permanent solution.

Next week's one-on-one talks between Israel and the Palesti-

(Continued on page 3)

Arabs see Shamir speech as overwhelmingly negative

Combined agency despatches

MADRID — Arabs criticised Israel's speech to the Middle East peace conference Thursday as overwhelmingly negative because it offered no concessions on the occupied territories.

Jordanians, Syrians and Palestinians said Mr. Shamir's speech showed the 76-year-old former Jewish guerrilla had not come to the historic talks to seek real peace.

Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber expressed regret over the contents of Mr. Shamir's address and said he had hoped to hear Mr. Shamir speaking about the future and about the achievements of peace in the Middle East rather than about history.

Dr. Abu Jaber, who heads the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the Madrid talks, asked why did the parties come to Madrid if the Israeli prime minis-

ter refuses to talk about a withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, and about the rights of the Palestinian people whose rights are denied by the Jewish state.

Speaking at a press conference Dr. Abu Jaber said that Mr. Shamir accuses the Arabs of rejecting its existence but no one seems to know exactly Israel's borders.

The foreign minister said Jordan is keen on having a new vision from Israel, which, he said, should avoid clichés of the past and should seek a just peace for all sides.

"He did not mention withdrawal. If it is not territory that matters then what are we talking about?" he told reporters in the palace's Hall of Columns where Mr. Shamir's address ended to stony silence from Arab delegates.

Referring to Mr. Shamir's call to transfer the talks from Madrid

to the Middle East, Dr. Abu Jaber said such move would undoubtedly destroy the conference.

Dr. Abu Jaber stressed that the peace conference should address the main questions of Israeli withdrawal from occupied lands and the rights of the Palestinian people as well as the status of Jerusalem.

Jordan has come to Madrid in order to reach a just settlement which the region has lacked for ages and to find a just solution to the Palestinian problem, especially the refugees who still live in camps and who ought to be repatriated, he said.

Dr. Abu Jaber reiterated that Jordan had accepted Resolution 242 of 1967, a resolution which the Palestinians also accepted and are willing to live by and have accepted the existence of Israel.

In reply to a question Dr. Abu

(Continued on page 6)

Palestinians celebrate presentation of cause

RAMALLAH, Occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Palestinians poured into the streets after their chief delegate's speech at the Madrid peace talks Thursday, decorating Israeli army jeeps with olive branches as smiling soldiers looked on.

"We let the world hear our cause," Nasser Ibrahim, a Palestinian who works in Israel, said after hearing a broadcast of Haider Abdul Shafi's statement of the Palestinian position at the Middle East peace talks.

Hundreds of men, women and children, marched down the main street of Ramallah — a town where Palestinians and Israeli troops have fought for four years — waving olive branches as a sign of peace.

They clambered onto jeeps of the military-run civil administration and the army, decorating them with the branches.

Soldiers who dispersed demonstrators with tear-gas an hour before, looked on smiling and shaking hands.

"This conference could be something very big for our people. We hope to get out our own independent state. We hope to get out from under Israeli occupation," said Mr. Ibrahim, a 20-year-old labourer.

The speech by Mr. Abdul Shafi, the chief Palestinian negotiator, followed a speech by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that was criticised by Palestinians but drew rare praise from the Israeli left.

The speech was important because it left all doors open," said Peace Now, Israel's largest peace movement.

"The movement expresses hope that this speech represents new positions... and that Mr. Shamir will not remain stuck in the ideological

stance which has blocked progress towards compromise and peace in the past."

Some of Mr. Shamir's leading critics in parliament praised his speech as "reasonable and moderate" but others charged it had been censored to meet U.S. approval.

"We are talking about a speech of Shamir," said Yossi Sarid, an outspoken leftist from the opposition Citizens' Rights movement party.

"There was no mention of settlements and that is not by chance. The prime minister took into account the possibility of territorial compromise. It was not a speech of 'not one inch'."

He said he had hoped Mr. Shamir would offer the gesture Arab participants were seeking — a freeze on settlements in the occupied territories.

"I was disappointed that Shamir did not throw down a gauntlet or roll the ball into the enemy's court. I expected him to say 'we will freeze settlements'," Mr. Sarid added.

Opposition member of parliament Haim Oron of the socialist Mapam Party said Mr. Shamir made no mention of Jewish settlements in occupied territories only to appease Washington, Israel's main ally and financial backer.

The Shamir government's enthusiastic drive to expand Jewish settlement in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem has antagonised Washington and deeply strained ties.

"The Americans are the organisers of this conference but they are also its censors. There is no doubt the speeches passed under the hands of the Americans," Mr. Oron told Israel Television.

Mr. Oron said Lebanon was "committed to the Palestinian cause," and wants Israel to relinquish of occupied lands and east Jerusalem.

Lebanon invokes U.N. Resolution 425, urges Israeli pullout

MADRID (Agencies) — Comparing the occupation of any of its land to the loss of "a vital limb," Lebanon Thursday used its voice at historic Middle East peace talks to call for Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bweiz invoked U.N. Security Council Resolution 425 in the renewed push by his government to get Israel out of a 1,000-square-kilometre strip along Israel's northern border.

The removal of Israel from the Jewish state's self-declared "security zone." — Carved out by Israel in 1985 following its invasion of Lebanon is to be the main issue in talks between the two countries.

Lebanon "cannot be fragmented," Mr. Bweiz told the delegates. "If Lebanon loses any of its areas, it would lose a vital limb. This would mean bleeding forever."

"This occupation and the events and developments which have accompanied it have cost Lebanon and the world very dearly," he said.

Mr. Bweiz is part of a government put in power last year when Syria, the main power in Lebanon, drove out rebel General Michel Aoun, ending the country's bloody 16-year-old civil war. The new Lebanese government is reestablishing control over its territory from various militias active during the civil war.

Mr. Bweiz also said Lebanon was "committed to the Palestinian cause," and wants Israel to relinquish of occupied lands and east Jerusalem.

Jordanians react angrily to Shamir's speech, praise Abu Jaber's address

By Serene Halasa and Nidal M. Ibrahim
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanians — from the common man to government officials to university professors — reacted with disappointment, sadness, disillusionment and anger at the speech given Thursday by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir at the Madrid peace conference.

At the same time, Jordanian Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber's speech was praised as being pragmatic and accurate of Jordan's position on the peace process and related issues.

Mr. Shamir, who is leading the Israeli delegation to the historic Middle East peace talks in the Spanish capital, reflected the same hardline view that has been emanating from Tel Aviv for the past few years, officials and analysts said.

"The speech was awful," said a former minister who requested anonymity. "Shamir did not move an inch and he seemed to insist on having all the land."

"He did not give any sign that they (the Israelis) are ready for the land for peace formula," he told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Shamir's speech, made at the Royal Palace in Madrid, was laced with historical and biblical references to the continuity and rights of the Israeli people to "the Land of Israel."

"He was directing his speech to the Torah mentality, placing a religious backdrop to disguise international legitimacy," said Taher Hikmat, a former minister and prominent lawyer. "He did not even show signs of compromise."

Mr. Shamir's speech was "evasive" and "emotional," seeking to counter attacks on Israel's claim to the land it occupied in the 1967 Middle East war, said Dr. Hazem Nuseibeh, former Jordanian ambassador to the United Nations.

"In his speech, Shamir ignored important issues such as international legitimacy, the rights of Palestinians on their own land, conciliation based on land for peace and the release of hundreds of thousands of political prisoners held in prisons in the occupied territories," he said.

While agreeing that the cornerstones of the peace conference were to be U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, Mr. Shamir nonetheless ignored the essence of those documents in his speech, said Dr. Naser Tahboub, a political science professor at the University of Jordan.

"Shamir presented a summary of Zionist history and linked it to the Arab-Israeli conflict, failing to acknowledge U.N. resolutions 242 and 338," he said.

Instead of talking about reconciliation based on international legitimacy and compromise, Mr. Shamir reflected a siege mentality, said Dr. Sari Nasir, a sociology professor at the University of Jordan.

"Shamir did not have much to offer, but seemed to tell the Arabs that Israel is insecure and needs proof that they will not threaten it," he said. "But Shamir forgot that Arabs, especially Palestinians, need more security from Israel. Especially as they slowly watch their lands being swallowed by illegal immigrants."

The meaning and failings of Mr. Shamir's speech was also reflected in comments from common Jordanians. The tone and content of Mr. Shamir's speech did not reflect that of a man willing to make the necessary concessions to achieve peace, they said.

"He wants peace on his own terms," said Salwa Bamieh, 39. "He calls for peace but didn't take any steps that would encourage other people to talk to him." A halt to the building of

settlements or easing some of the measures used to control the 1.7 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are some of the steps that would reflect a true desire for peace, Ms. Bamieh said.

"The man is still speaking with the old mentality," said Mohammad Mashriq, a 35-year-old Palestinian from Hebron. "He is speaking like nothing has changed in the world or the region."

"If he really wants peace, he should give some indication," Mr. Mashriq said.

Loay Wabbeh, a 21-year-old Jordanian, said Mr. Shamir's speech reflected his true intentions. "I think he doesn't want peace," he said. "He came to the peace conference to have relations with Arabs without giving anything. He took a very strong position."

Donia Znaiter, a 22-year-old Palestinian from Haifa, said she sympathized with Mr. Shamir's references to the persecution of Jews. The Palestinian diaspora and the painful events that brought it about, she added, gives Jews and Palestinians a common point of reference that should be the basis for an understanding.

While Mr. Shamir's speech was interpreted as a regurgitation of the hardline Likud ideology, Dr. Abu Jaber's speech, while criticized for some deficiencies, received widespread praise.

Drawing heavily from His Majesty King Hussein's speech to the National Congress on Oct. 12 and on the principle of land for peace, Dr. Abu Jaber called on Israel to abandon the "mental straitjacket" that has prevented it from recognizing the national rights of the Palestinians and to seek accommodation and reconciliation with the Arabs.

"Dr. Abu Jaber used logic and common sense in reflecting the Jordanian position that calls for real and comprehensive peace," said Dr. Tahboub, the political science professor.

Dr. Wabbeh said he was disappointed by Dr. Abu Jaber's speech in that it did not answer Mr. Shamir's references to the spilling of Jewish blood.

"I don't think it was as strong as Shamir's," he said. "I was expecting Abu Jaber's speech to be as strong."

Mr. Shamir's speech, full of descriptive references which created an image of suffering and bloodshed perpetrated on the Jewish people, should have been countered with reference to the plight of the Palestinians, he said.

Also, the speech was not presented in a forceful manner and was haphazard at times, the official said.

Still, the speech received praise from Jordanians in that it again communicated to the world Jordan's willingness to find a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Dr. Abu Jaber's speech "shows that Jordan is going for peace," Ms. Bamieh said. At the same time, she added, it was clear that the Kingdom was seeking a "fair peace. We don't want a peace at any price."

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King meets European Parliament chief Crespo believes most Israelis ready for compromise

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein received Thursday European Parliament President Enrique Baron Crespo and an accompanying delegation which arrived in Amman late Wednesday on a three-day visit.

Discussions during the meeting centred on the Middle East peace conference, which opened in Madrid Wednesday, and ways to bring it to a successful end with emphasis on Europe's role in supporting the peace process, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The meeting also discussed Euro-Jordanian relations and ways of promoting and bolstering them.

King Hussein expressed satisfaction of the level of these relations.

Mr. Crespo expressed Europe's support for Jordan and voiced pride in King Hussein and his stance which support peace endeavours.

The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Taher Masri, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Senator Ahmad Obeidat, the King's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh and the King's Military Secretary His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ben Mohammad.

Mr. Crespo will hold a press conference at Queen Alia International Airport



His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Thursday meet with European Parliament President Enrique Baron Crespo (Petra photo)

before his departure Friday in which he will talk about the outcome of his visit to Jordan.

Mr. Crespo, who arrived in Jordan from Israel, said earlier he believed most Israelis were ready for a compromise to settle the 43-year-old Middle East conflict with the Arabs.

"My advice to all the parties (in the Madrid talks) is to have a lot of patience and to be ready to go forward," he told reporters after talks with Jordanian parliamentarians.

While in the Jewish state,

Mr. Crespo, a Spanish socialist who was elected to his post in 1989, addressed the Israeli Knesset (parliament) and met several lawmakers and Palestinian leaders.

"The atmosphere there is one of expectations, fears and hopes. People are waiting and looking forward to a positive outcome and I think they must try to profit of this momentum to go forward," he said before going for talks with King Hussein.

"But, I can say in Israel, basically, the majority thinks that a compromise is feasible

and is necessary."

Mr. Crespo ruled out suggestions that the European Community would exert pressure on Israel if it refused to soften its hardline stand at the talks.

"... I think that the best thing to be done is to let the people go ahead and express their will," he said.

"Now we are in a moment of hope and are not of talking of pressure. Peace can only come through the positions of the people that must make up their mind to share the future of this region peacefully."

Abdul Shafi sets the tone for negotiating position

By Lami K. Andoni
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

THE IMPLICITLY, albeit unequivocally, pledging allegiance to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and reiterating commitment to Palestinian national rights, head of the Palestinian negotiating team Haider Abdul Shafi Thursday challenged but did not break the ground rules of the Madrid Middle East peace conference.

In his 45-minute address to the opening session, Dr. Abdul Shafi indicated that despite the physical absence of the PLO — in accordance with American and Israeli terms — the organisation remained the democratically chosen leader of the Palestinians inside the Israeli-occupied territories and in the diaspora.

He also firmly reiterated full-fledged commitment to complete harmony with the PLO institutions resolutions to the goal of establishing an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital — a goal which Israel vehemently resists and the U.S. refuses to support.

The Palestinian speech, in the view of political observers, was expected to set the tone for the Arab negotiating position — since the Palestinian problem is regarded by all Arabs as the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict — and to positively influence public opinion in support of Arab participation at the peace parity.

Dr. Abdul Shafi was cautious not to raise hopes or expectations but to prepare the Arab people for a long process and possibly as the Palestinian delegates refer to the conference "a new stage in the struggle for the liberation."

Dr. Abdul Shafi deliberately avoided any reference by name to the PLO in order not to give Israel a strong pretext to accuse the Palestinian delegation of violating the ground rules and consequently of disrupting the conference. But the implied meaning in Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech was the delegation was an integral part of the PLO which shall remain the party that will have the final say on behalf of the Palestinians at the talks.

Furthermore, the speech practically challenged the American terms for the Palestinian participation at the conference — i.e. stipulations that the delegation was confirmed to Palestinians from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip — by asserting that the team represented the Palestinian people everywhere.

Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech, which bears strong prints of the leading Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish's philosophical touch, revealed the main outlines of the Palestinian negotiating strategy.

The main element of the Palestinian negotiating position, as contained in Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech, was that the Palestinians have not abandoned any of their national demands despite their failure of securing American support for these goals prior to the conference.

To begin with, Dr. Abdul Shafi was firm in reiterating that negotiations will be meaningless if there was no immediate halt to the Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories.

The leader of the Palestinian delegation refrained, however, from making any threats or even implying that the team will withdraw if the objective was not attained.

A possible scenario is that the Palestinians will simply

not budge on their position and will refuse to move to other issues unless the settlement problem is addressed.

The Palestinians, again as implied in Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech, are seeking to develop the already set agenda to meet the minimum Palestinian national demands.

That was particularly clear when Dr. Abdul Shafi presented the Palestinian interpretation of the transitional period — which is supposed to involve Palestinian self-rule or autonomy for the Palestinians.

The key words revealing Palestinian thinking came when Dr. Abdul Shafi emphasised that the transitional period should not be allowed to be transformed into a "permanent" situation.

This statement reflected one of the major Palestinian concerns that the autonomy will turn into some form of legitimisation of "a subtle," legitimate Israeli occupation.

To prevent such a possibility, according to the points made in Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech, the Palestinian delegation will demand the implementation of the fourth Geneva Convention to provide international protection of the Palestinian people and to ensure that the Palestinians will assert control over their lives.

But a main challenge for the Palestinian delegation is how to succeed in directing the negotiations, specifically how to shape the interim period in a way that can lead to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state — a goal that the Palestinian delegation is firmly adhering to again despite clear American indications that the U.S. does not support such an option.

Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech also indicated that the

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Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech also indicated that the



Abdul Shafi. Palestinians will try to invoke all the United Nations Security Council resolutions pertaining to the Israeli-Arab conflict to attain their goals.

For years the PLO had insisted that a Middle East peace conference had to be convened on the basis of all the Security Council resolutions so as to guarantee the rights of the Palestinian refugees — of both 1948 and 1967 — and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. But eventually it had to authorise Palestinian participation on the basis of resolutions 242 and 338 which fall short of an explicit recognition of Palestinian national rights.

However, Palestinian officials believe that they will be possible to invoke other resolutions during the negotiations.

Dr. Abdul Shafi's concluding statement, quoting PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's famous appeal in 1974 to the United Nations sums up the Palestinian position. "I came here with a gun in one hand and olive branch in another. Please don't let the olive branch drop from my hand," Mr. Arafat said then.

Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech indicated to the world that the Palestinians message has not changed — the Palestinians are giving peace a chance but the other forms of struggle will continue if diplomacy failed.

Palestinian presentation designed to avoid pitfalls, contains elements of joint formula

Jordanian and Palestinian calls complete a full circle

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Palestinian delegation's speech to the Madrid conference carried a positive combination of pragmatism, emotional appeal and reiteration of fundamental Palestinian demands but allowed the starting point for territorial negotiations between Arabs and Israelis to be the 1967 borders rather than emphasising the pre-1967 concessions made by Arabs, analysts here said Thursday.

The tacit acceptance of the 1967 "borders" of Israel is itself a sweeping concession in that even in 1948 Israel occupied more land than it was allocated under U.N. Resolution 181 which partitioned Palestine.

Observers and analysts agreed that Dr. Haider Abdul Shafi's speech was very firm on Palestinian fundamental points yet could still be accepted and understood by international diplomacy.

"The speech could be accepted by residents of a Palestinian refugee camp and addressed to a European royal palace setting," said a former senior Jordanian official, who requested anonymity. "While Dr. Abdul Shafi did not fail to provide substantive statements on the Palestinian problem, he also portrayed genuine emotions and did not antagonise the co-sponsors of the conference. It was a very crafty speech," the former official said.

But, prominent lawyers Ibrahim Bakr and Taher Hikmat pointed out that Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech allowed itself to follow the lines of other Arab speeches by "starting at mid-point rather than slightly above it to allow for manoeuvre in negotiations over borders."

Mr. Hikmat, a former minister, argued that the speeches delivered by the Arab parties to the Arab-Israeli talks did



Taher Hikmat

not mention that "Palestine was occupied twice — once in 1948 and another in 1967."

On the other hand, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Mr. Hikmat pointed out, "gave a very stiff speech that started at the climax of his demands, therefore allowing himself a large room for concessions."

Although the Arabs were expected to portray a moderate stance to add momentum to the historical Madrid conference, which has brought Arabs and Israelis to the negotiating table, Mr. Hikmat said he would have liked to see a "more hardened strategy on the borders issue."

"It seems that adopting the mid-point strategy from the onset of negotiations would mean making concessions to below that mid-point while starting slightly higher may have allowed a margin of concessions towards that mid-point," Mr. Hikmat said.

Mr. Bakr described as a "major mistake" the acceptance of 1967 borders at the beginning of negotiations. Even in the context of international legitimacy, he said, the armistice lines drawn after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war "were never final."

Mr. Bakr also criticised the Arab speeches, including that of Dr. Abdul Shafi, for failing to address the role played by

the co-sponsors of the peace conference in maintaining Israel's hegemony over Palestinian territory through continued political and military support.

"Israel was created through an agreement with Britain. It was sustained by the U.S. and then further strengthened by the Soviet Union's decision to allow the Soviet Jewish influx into Palestine," Mr. Bakr said.

Other analysts, while accepting this criticism, stressed the international value of Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech and the need for it to remain acceptable to the co-sponsors, especially since it clearly antagonised the Israeli delegation by its clear reference to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Palestinians in the diaspora.

"Throughout Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech it was clear that the PLO is the party that authorised him to be there and that he represented all Palestinians, including Jerusalemites and those in the diaspora. It was done in a very subtle way," an analyst said. "It was extremely good."

Other analysts also noted that the deliberate concessions offered by the Palestinian delegate could also be clearly designed to preempt any Israeli argument over his reference to the PLO.

"On the one hand, the delegate said that the Palestinian delegation was authorised by the PLO," noted one analyst. "On the other hand, he also implied that the delegation was more or less willing to accept the same starting point which, by all indications, is also acceptable to the Israelis as the starting point."

"It effectively pulls out the rug from under the Israeli feet," he said.

In general, analysts said, Dr. Abdul Shafi pulled together all the elements that the Palestinian and Jordanian viewers needed to see emanating from the Palestinian delegation at the Madrid conference.

"He was very firm on the Arab and Palestinian foundations and stressed the status of Jerusalem, yet he was also able to address a segment of the Israelis and lay out exactly what the outcome of the negotiations should be," one political analyst said.

"The elements were all there: Withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, the establishment of a separate Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital and halting settlements immediately," the analyst pointed out.

Other analysts added that Dr. Abdul Shafi's speech and his announcement that Palestinians will accept an interim arrangement for the occupied Arab territories also served to complete the circle that was started by Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber's speech earlier Thursday.

"Dr. Abu Jaber wrapped the international legality argument and the Arab insistence on a peaceful solution based on international law but left the issues that concern the Palestinians for them to complete," one analyst said.

"Dr. Abdul Shafi was left to accept what only the Palestinians can say they would: the interim arrangement for the occupied territories," the analyst added.

Although voices of dissent were heard among the analysts over whether Dr. Abdul Shafi was within "his terms of reference" when he announced Palestinian acceptance over the interim period, most analysts agreed that the Palestinian delegate's announcement, coupled with his statements on a separate confederation with Jordan, "provided practical solutions to the Palestinian problem."

"What we had after we heard the two speeches from the Jordanian and Palestinian sides is the complete framework for the Jordanian-Palestinian argument," he added.

Syria: No compromise over land

(Continued from page 1)

for all."

"The continuation of Israel's unjustified and obstinate position is putting the world on the edge of unlimited danger and prevents the region from enjoying peace," he added.

"Peace and the occupation of other peoples' land cannot go together, to make peace permanent and stable, it should be comprehensive," he declared.

"Every inch of Arab land occupied by the Israelis by war and force, the Golan, the West Bank, Jerusalem, must be returned in their entirety to their legitimate owners," he said. He repeated the point later on in his speech.

Mr. Sharaa said the Jewish people had known an unprecedented level of tolerance in the Arab World in the past but has

responded with inhumane treatment of Palestinians.

"Had Israel's political orientation since 1948 been humane, millions of Arabs, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese would not have been uprooted from their homes nor would they have been denied until today their right to return."

"Had Israel's policies not been settler-colonialist, Palestinians languishing under Israeli occupation since 1967 would not have been denied all their fundamental rights, foremost among which is the right of self-determination."

"If the entire world were to adopt such claims it would have to encourage all Christians to emigrate to the Vatican, and all Muslims to emigrate to Holy Mecca."

Shamir

(Continued from page 1)

nians will first focus on an interim three-year period of self-rule.

"But nothing can be achieved without good will. I appeal to the Arab leaders, those who are here and those who have not yet joined the process: Show us and the world that you accept Israel's existence."

"Demonstrate your readiness to accept Israel as a permanent entity in the region. Let the people in our region hear you speak in the language of reconciliation, coexistence and peace with Israel," Mr. Shamir said.

"In Israel there is an almost total consensus for the need for peace. We only differ on the best ways to achieve it," he said.

"We would like to see in your countries an end to poisonous preachings against Israel. We

would like to see like to see an indication of the kind of hunger for peace which characterises Israeli society."

Arab delegation sat impassively through his highly-charged, sometimes combative speech in the hall of columns inside Madrid's Royal Palace.

"Today, the Gulf separating the two sides is still too wide, the Arab hostility to Israel too deep — the lack of trust too immense to permit a dramatic, quick solution."

"But," Mr. Shamir continued, "we must start on the long road to reconciliation with this first step in the peace process."

Mr. Shamir made no mention in his 30-minute speech of the 100,000 Jewish settlers in the occupied territories.

The settlements have been condemned by the United States as an obstacle to peace and Arab delegations have appealed to Israel to halt their construction.

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Palestinian stones and Shamir's fossilised history

THE PALESTINIAN children of the intifada, instead of throwing stones on Israeli troops, were Thursday handing them olive branches. That most certainly was not a Palestinian reaction to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's call on them to end the intifada. It is an Arab expression of the yearning for peace and compromise in Palestine.

Shamir on Thursday, in Madrid, kept on the podium to deliver Israel's address to the Middle East peace conference. Instead of talking about the mechanism for peace and his vision for reconciliation, the Israeli prime minister lectured his audience on his version of the history of Palestine and the Jewish people. Not only did he misinterpret history, but almost blamed everybody, including the Palestinians whom the Israeli army is repressing, for the plight of the Jews throughout the ages. The fact that the whole world was waiting in eagerness to hear Shamir offer some hope for peace did not deter him from revelling in the bitterness he acquired as a persecuted Jew in pre-World War II Poland. That bitterness seems to have obscured his vision of the real objective of the Madrid gathering.

While Dr. Kameel Abu Jaber, the foreign minister, talked about Jordan's vision of the future and of peace, Shamir chose to talk about the past, twisting the fact that Jews lived all over the Middle East in peace and harmony until the creation of the Jewish state. "Although the world, and the Israelis themselves, know and are aware of our innocence of the crimes against the Jewish people, Israel's indignation, outrage has not induced a sense of balanced justice," Dr. Abu Jaber said. Abu Jaber reminded his Israeli counterparts that Jews and Arabs were the children of Abraham, the founder of the three great monotheistic religions. Shamir, meanwhile, admitted that 800,000 Jews inhabited the Arab World "before the rise of Islam" and only left after the creation of Israel. In contrast to Shamir's loaded address, which failed to touch on the plight of the Palestinians, the head of the Palestinian delegation, Dr. Halder Abdul Shafi expressed Palestinian sympathy with Jewish suffering and their agony as occupiers of Palestine and oppressors of Palestinians.

Shamir repeatedly called on the Arabs to make peace, but he failed to say how and on what bases he was prepared to make peace. In his rhetoric, the Israeli prime minister also sought to dehumanise the Palestinians by accusing them of being terrorists and of exposing their children to danger by sending them to throw bombs and stones at (Israeli) soldiers and civilians.

What clearly emerges from the Israeli prime minister's address is an unwillingness to accept that as his people nurtured a 2,000-year-old yearning for Palestine, Palestinians who were forced to leave the Holy Land in 1948 and 1967 have also a strong longing for that country. What Shamir fails to understand at this crucial moment, this last chance, is that the Palestinian claim for Palestine is as strong, if not stronger, than that of the Jews. And unless the two people shared the land and shared Jerusalem as well, there will never be peace in Palestine. If Palestinian and Israeli hopes for peace are squandered by those who, like Shamir, thrive on twisted tales of history instead of dreaming of a better future and mutual coexistence, the children who distributed olive branches Thursday will go back to throwing stones.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE FOUR speeches delivered at the opening session of the Madrid peace conference dwelt on the need for the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and stressed the importance of respecting legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Thursday. The paper said that these principles reflected President Bush's own initiative of last March, further stressing the fact that the peace conference convened in Madrid was a real effort towards achieving these goals. The European Community's address to the conference laid stress on the need for the implementation of the international legitimacy and U.N. Security Council resolutions, said the paper. The European Community emphasised that the Europeans are full partners and can be called upon in the process to help the two sides reach a lasting settlement, the paper added. Egypt's address was more explicit with regard to the Palestine question. Foreign Minister Amer Mousa, who delivered the address, stressed the need for full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands, including Jerusalem which Israel annexed after the 1967 war. The paper said that the opening session reflected an international consensus on the need for Israel to comply with the will of the world community and implement U.N. resolutions which entail the exchange of land for peace so that a lasting peace can be achieved. The paper expressed satisfaction with the addresses of the speakers on the first day of the conference and voiced hope that the two sides will reach a just settlement that would bring an end to the sufferings of the peoples in the Middle East region.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily Thursday expressed disappointment with presidents of the Soviet Union and the United States who failed to live up to the aspirations of millions of Arabs when they avoided openly to side with justice. Tareq Masarweh said that the American president has said that the world community can not impose peace on the region, but the Arab masses realise that it is in the power of the world community in general and the superpowers in particular to force Israel to leave the land it has occupied for a quarter of a century in defiance of U.N. Security Council resolutions and world legality. In referring to the Soviet leader's speech, Masarweh said that Mr. Gorbachev had referred to the right of the Palestinians in their homeland, but his country's actions speak otherwise. He said that by dispatching hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews to occupied Palestine Moscow is helping the Israelis to evict more Palestinians, depriving the oppressed people of Palestine of any rights. Both presidents, he stressed, should have demanded our outright freeze to Jewish settlement programmes as a condition to start the direct negotiations, the writer said. He said that the Arabs should be careful and vigilant.

The following editorial appeared in the Oct. 26 issue of the Economist.

BY making it almost impossible for Israel or the Arabs to stay away from the conference in Madrid, James Baker, the American secretary of state, has done what nobody else has done before. He has persuaded the Arabs and the Israelis to sit together and talk peace. Consider, for a moment, how bizarre this is. The first big war between Israel and the Arabs happened in 1948. The fact that it has taken 43 years and half-a-dozen wars to start comprehensive talks (Egypt alone came to Camp David) is a grotesque indictment of the way human beings organise their affairs. The fact that they have now agreed to talk requires an explanation.

Part of the explanation is that the United States, thinking freshly after the end of the cold war, has lost patience with the Likud Party's dream of a greater Israel and resolved to force it into compromise. Part has to do with the subtlety of Mr. Baker, who has spent months since the Gulf war methodically depriving all the parties of their usual excuses for being intransigent. But the main explanation has to do with something invented back in the 1920s. Its inventor called it the iron wall.

Most of the early Zionists paid little attention to the Arabs of Palestine. They thought, or hoped, or pretended to think and hope, that the Arabs would accept and maybe even welcome the creation of a Jewish state. One right-wing Zionist, Vladimir Jabotinsky, saw that this was nonsense. He said that the Arabs would oppose the swamping of Palestine with Jewish immigrants and that "if we were Arabs, we would not accept it either." His conclusion was that Zionism could prosper only behind an "iron wall" of military power.

One distant day, when the Arabs accepted that the wall was impenetrable, they would learn to live with the Jewish state.

live with the Jewish state.

Resignation versus reconciliation

Jabotinsky was outside Zionism's mainstream, but he got it right. The Palestinians never accepted that the creation of Israel was anything other than a monstrous theft of their own country; and they do not accept it now. What they did come to accept — for the first time, formally, at a meeting of the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 1988 — is Israel's permanence.

One by one, many of Israel's neighbours have accepted it too. Egypt made peace in 1979. The wider Arab World did not start to soften until the Arab League's Fez summit of 1982, which spoke of peace with "all states" in the region, though it shrank from uttering the word Israel. Iran and Libya still do not accept it; Colonel Muammar Qadhafi has said that all the Jews who did not live in Palestine before Israel was created would have to go back to their countries of origin. Syria's President Hafez Assad says, mumbly, that he accepts it. But he did not even pretend to do so until the collapse of Soviet power made the iron wall look unbreachable.

All of this ancient stuff still matters. History will press like a stone on the conference in Madrid. It has imprinted on the Arab side a conviction, impossible to erase, that the very existence of Israel is an injustice. On the Israeli side, a conviction, equally indelible, that if the Arabs could find a way to slit Israel's throat they would joyfully do so. If peace is possible, it has to be looked for somewhere in between the Arab demand for justice and the Israeli demand for security.

A lot of people, when they hear Israel recite its security mantra, stifle a yawn. Why should this regular winner of wars, bomber of Arabs, stager of audacious

A land to share

raids, ally of America and possessor of atomic bombs be afraid of anything? The yawners need to imagine the 40 years of cold war in Europe compressed into the area of Wales. On each side of the Arab-Israeli conflict are vast armies, with thousands of tanks and hundreds of modern aircraft — and worse horrors, such as chemicals and missiles, in reserve. If Israel went back to its pre-1967 lines, as the Arabs claim, it would be a small state, a few months' ride from the border with the Arab world. It would be a small state, a few months' ride from the border with the Arab world. It would be a small state, a few months' ride from the border with the Arab world.

A peace that leaves Israel's anxieties unanswered is only too likely to lapse into the old pattern of fear and war. The dismal precedent is 1957, the year after Suez, when President Eisenhower forced the Israelis out of the Sinai peninsula but failed to get President Nasser to accept Israel's legitimacy. That simply brought the Israelis thundering back in again the next time they were threatened.

If 1957 shows the need to pay attention to Israel's fears, the Israeli-Egyptian peace of 1979 shows the worthlessness of an agreement that neglects the Palestinians. In Palestinian minds Camp David has become a symbol of betrayal. President Sadat made his peace with Israel, and the world applauded, but all he won for the residents of the West Bank and Gaza was a promise of self-government, which Israel anyway ignored. If the Israelis expected the Palestinians to fall into silence, they were wrong. By the end of 1987 Israel was facing the intifada, an unstoppable outpouring of Palestinian rage that has ebbed and flowed for nearly four years but refuse to end. No peace is just if it keeps nearly 2 million Palesti-

nians under Israeli military occupation.

The absence of enthusiasm for the encounter in Madrid is natural. The conference's basic text is Resolution 242, which called in 1967 for Israel to withdraw, in return for peace, from land it had captured in the Arab-Israeli war a few months earlier. Israel's government is therefore going to Madrid reluctantly, fearing a conspiracy to dismantle its iron wall in return for peace of paper. Palestinians also sniff conspiracy in the making. At Israel's insistence their own political leadership, in the form of the PLO, has been humiliatingly excluded from Madrid. The meeting's sponsors, America and what is left of the Soviet Union, say the first aim of the Israeli-Palestinian bit of the many-sided talks will be to organise an "interim" period of self-government in the territories. This sounds worryingly like Camp David. What if there is another attempt to make peace over Palestinian heads, with Syria recovering the Golan Heights but Israel keeping the West Bank?

The unhappiness on both sides is encouraging, because it suggests that neither expects to achieve its maximum demands. Israel's demand, holding on to all of the occupied territories forever, is anyway the antithesis of security. If another war comes, Israel's army would undoubtedly prefer to be sitting on the mountains of the Golan and Judea than in the Galilee valley or the coastal plain. The point is that, if Israel insists on keeping everything, another war almost certainly will come, just as it did in 1973, when Israel put all its faith in the desert and the canal and none in the work of diplomats. Madrid offers a chance for Israel to end the state of war altogether, without having to expose its throat to the knife.

How? If Israeli withdrawal from all or most of the West Bank, and all or most of the Golan Heights, has to be match-

ed by an Arab offer of extensive security arrangements, including the demilitarisation of the evacuated territories and policing for the new borders. Outside powers — America, the U.N. — will have to prop up the parts of the iron wall Israel abandons. That is exactly why the Palestinians' maximum demand, for proper statehood and everything that goes with it, is as unattainable as Israel's.

When is a state not a state

A lot of the usual privileges of sovereignty such as the right to raise an army, control its own airspace, and form its own alliances, may not be available to the future Palestine. It will in any case be a most peculiar state, needing a corridor across Israel to link its Gaza and West Bank halves, and — who knows? — sharing Jerusalem in some fashion with Israel. Some Palestinians will complain that it is not a state at all, and some will continue to demand, and fight for, the recovery of places that have been part of Israel since 1948. Among these irredentists could be hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees who will stream out from Lebanon and the other places of exile not back to their homes (most diaspora Palestinians come from Jaffa, Haifa and Galilee) but to an already teeming West Bank.

A peace on these lines could come only gradually, it carefully measured steps. Even then, it sounds almost impossible to achieve. Why should the Palestinians expect so little? Why should the Israelis risk so much? Hope, slender as it is, comes from two recent changes. One is the ripeness of the international environment: a domestically confident American president, willing to bully as well as woo Israel, an enfeebled Soviet Union that has restored relations with the Jewish state. The other is the growing awareness, on both sides, of the

absence of alternatives.

The PLO may be shut out from Madrid, but its decision to let other Palestinians go in its place is evidence of a hunger for compromise. If the Palestinians demand too much, the road from Madrid will lead nowhere. One who Israel's whose attachment to the West Bank is more ideological than strategic will merely tighten their grip. Although Yitzhak Shamir, Israel's prime minister, is one such Israeli, many others hope for more from Madrid. The intifada, and the missile attacks on Israel during the Gulf war, have persuaded the bulk of ordinary Israelis that the status quo is untenable. One opinion poll suggests that nearly 90 per cent of them support the decision to go to Madrid. What remains to be seen is whether Israeli voters can ever turn this generalised wish for peace into a bitter decision to abandon the West Bank, the place where Judaism began.

If they want peace, they must. In 1937 Jabotinsky visited Britain's House of Lords, to press the case for a Jewish state. He said he understood the desire of the Arabs to set up a state in Palestine, but that it had to be balanced against the disaster awaiting the Jews of Europe. The Arabs already had several states: when the Arab claim for another one in Palestine was confronted with the Jewish claim to be saved, it was like "the claims of appetite versus the claims of starvation."

Within a few years, Hitler had proved him tragically right. But that was half a century ago. Today the Jews have their sanctuary. The whole world is ready to accept Israel's permanence and legitimacy within legally defined borders. For Israel to demand the West Bank as well, on top of the territory it gained in 1948, has become a claim of appetite. It is the claim of the Palestinians that is now the claim of starvation. Unless it is met, there will be no peace.

Getting to 'yes' in Madrid

By Roger Fisher

The writer is professor of law at Harvard and director of the Harvard Negotiation Project. He is co-author of "Getting To Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In." The following article is reprinted from the New York Times of Oct. 27.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. While Secretary of State James Baker's persistence may lead Israel and the Arabs to sit down together in Madrid, there is little basis for optimism. People virtually ignore questions of process as they focus on "what really counts" — substance: "I don't care which road I take, as long as I get there." But the road taken determines where we end up.

Until now, the parties have treated negotiations as pure bargaining that reward intransigence. The more extreme Israel's position ("not one inch of territory for peace") and the more stubbornly Israel resists making any concession, the greater chance it sees of retaining the occupied territories. Palestinians, too, are under pressure to adopt extreme positions ("no recognition of Israel").

For Israel, direct negotiations are unlikely to produce an agreement with anyone — Palestinians, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon. Since a Palestinian peace is likely to be the heart of the matter, a key question arises: How to produce a plan that can be adapted later for others? To design an effective process we need to understand two crucial points: today, each side reasonably says no to what the other demands, and neither is able to put forward a realistic proposal of its own.

The most basic Palestinian demand is for statehood. As Israel asks itself: "Shall we now agree to a Palestinian state?" the negative consequences of saying yes are overwhelming. We antagonise many constituents; we increase the risk of losing the West Bank; we create a potential threat to our security; we reward Palestinian violence; the Palestinians will ask for more.

To Israel, the consequences of saying no look attractive: the government retains support among its public constituencies, maximises the chance of keeping the West Bank, minimises the risk of a hostile Palestinian state and keeps its options open. In saying no today, Israel acts reasonably from its viewpoint. It thus insists that the Palestinians give up the idea of a state.

How does that choice look to those asked to abandon the goal of a Palestinian state? If they say yes, the negative consequences include: we abandon our right to self-determination; we give up our rights under the partition resolution; we yield to Israeli military force; we accept endless domination; we abandon all those who have fought and died; we get nothing now and reduce our chance of getting anything in the future.

For Palestinians, the reasons for saying no are compelling. Hence the deadlock. Better answers cannot be expected until a better proposal is on the table. Yet neither Israel nor the Palestinians can be expected to advance a better proposal.

No Israeli government has ever officially proposed what Israel's boundaries ought to be, for good reason. Any proposal would alienate many constituents: those who want to keep the territories; those who want to treat all residents democratically or those who want an overwhelmingly Jewish state. Israel cannot be big, democratic and overwhelmingly Jewish.

And while costing an Israeli leader needed support, a peace plan would be treated by Palestinians as an opening position from which to demand further concessions. This is why Israel has always found it far easier to accept (with great reluctance) a proposal put forward by others, whether partition, Security Council Resolution

242 or the Camp David Accords.

The Palestinians have a comparable problem. Any specific proposal will offend many constituents and be rejected by Israel as inadequate.

These difficulties will not be overcome by having Palestinians and Israelis talk face-to-face. Neither will they be overcome by trying to reach an agreement in principle first and filling in the details later. That process works well only when the parties have great confidence in each other: "Let's get married." Where there is hostility and distrust, each wants to know what it is getting into before it makes a commitment.

Talking about a "peace process" will not produce peace. In the past, progress has been made only when somebody, other than the parties drafted the terms. Accepting that premise, the questions become what should be drafted, how and by whom.

Secretary Baker apparently wants to have the Madrid conference produce an interim agreement providing some kind of Palestinian autonomy for a few years. Any such agreement would presumably stop the violence, limit new settlements in the West Bank and buy time.

But the parties would examine suspiciously each word in such an agreement — about Jerusalem, borders, land, water, electricity, police power, courts, elections — for its possible impact on a final settlement. The passage of time may make peace more difficult, so it seems better and possibly easier to work now on the terms of a final settlement.

A desirable approach would be based on the successful one used at Camp David to produce the Israeli-Egyptian accord. A small team of outsiders in Madrid would use what I call a parallel one-text procedure. This involves work not on a single draft but simultaneously on two possible versions of a settlement. One would be the text of an agreement that, without a Palestinian state, would seek the best possible reconciliation of legitimate Israeli and Palestinian interests.

Secretary Baker apparently wants to have the Madrid conference produce an interim agreement providing some kind of Palestinian autonomy for a few years. Any such agreement would presumably stop the violence, limit new settlements in the West Bank and buy time.

The second would seek to produce the reconciliation of those interests if there is to be a Palestinian state. This draft might take the form of a Security Council resolution accepting Palestine as a U.N. member, provided it accepted a long list of terms. Such terms might provide for a neutral, unarmed state with open borders. The texts would be nonbinding drafts to which no one would yet be committed. But they would constitute what experts considered the best possible agreements for all concerned on the alternative assumptions: that there would or would not be a U.N. member called Palestine.

The two drafts could be compared with the way compensation disputes are settled in professional baseball: the player and club owner each submits a final proposal to an arbitrator who decides

only which is fairer. Similarly, the Security Council could serve as an arbitrator, deciding upon the better draft. Proponents of each approach would compete to make their proposal the fairer.

How would the drafts be prepared? In Madrid, the team's members would circulate among the negotiating parties (who would meet with each other) and other knowledgeable people such as Middle East experts, focusing not on stated positions but on underlying interests.

The team would go around and around, preparing successive versions and subjecting them to criticism as to legitimate interests that might not have been adequately taken into account. The drafts would cover all major issues and establish procedures for dealing with open questions and future differences. No one would be asked for commitments or concessions; that should protect the team from being derailed by public awareness of its work.

Who should prepare the drafts? The U.S. is probably not the best party. It is subject to political constraints like those on the parties, and producing the drafts could handicap our ability to perform our role as a crucial Security Council member that

might have to choose between them.

Candidates might include the Scandinavian governments, the Netherlands and Canada, but need not be a government. A nongovernmental entity funded by a foundation or other disinterested source could put together a small team, and a distinguished individual asked to head the team.

The power of the process would not depend on the pure neutrality of the team but on its competence and ability to produce practical, realistic solutions that would strike Security Council members and the parties as fair.

There is no chance that the parties will sign a peace agreement unless there is an agreement to be signed. If Israel and the Palestinians fail they won't deserve the blame. We will.

Bush speech hits subtle balance, offers something to everyone

By Alan Elsner
Reuters

MADRID — U.S. President George Bush on Thursday struck a delicate balance, by endorsing some deeply-held positions of both Arabs and Israelis but avoided mention of the sensitive issue of Israeli settlements.

But in an address at the opening of the Middle East peace conference clearly aimed at public opinion as well as the leaders at the conference, Mr. Bush also warned both sides that they would bear a heavy responsibility to future generations if they failed to compromise in negotiations.

From the Arab viewpoint, the key points were Mr. Bush's reiteration that peace needed to be based on an Israeli withdrawal from territories it captured in the 1967 Middle East war and his emphasis on the need to find justice for the Palestinian people.

"We believe that territorial compromise is essential for peace," Mr. Bush declared bluntly.

Coming only hours after Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir again claimed Jewish ownership over the territories and refused to consider even a partial withdrawal, Mr. Bush's statement was important to reassure the Arabs of U.S. intentions.

In his analysis of a future peace agreement, Mr. Bush laid equal emphasis on the need to provide security for Israel and justice for the Palestinians.

"What we seek ... is a solution that meets the twin tests of fairness and security," he said.

"We know that peace must be also based on fairness. In the absence of fairness, there will be no legitimacy, no stability and this applies above all to the Palestinian people, many of whom have known turmoil and frustration above all," the president said.

But Arabs were bound to be disappointed that Mr. Bush did not mention, even in passing or by implication, Israeli settlements in the occupied territories — the single issue over which he has clashed most bitterly with Israel.

This may have been because the United States, as co-sponsor of the peace conference and future key mediator in what are certain to be long and difficult Arab-Israeli negotiations, needs to retain the confidence of all parties.

He sought to reassure Israel that Washington would not im-

pose terms it did not want. But recent events have left the Israeli bitter and suspicious about the U.S. role and Mr. Bush's words are likely to have provided only partial comfort at best.

Mr. Bush last month delayed consideration of an Israeli request for massive economic aid, in the form of \$10 billion in loan guarantees, to help it absorb Soviet Jewish immigrants.

He said at the time he did not want to upset preparations for the peace conference, but officials said he was also determined to prevent Israel expanding its settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The nearest Mr. Bush came to mentioning settlements was in his call to both sides to avoid words or actions that might upset the peace negotiations.

The other main event in the opening session of the conference, the address by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, only further emphasised U.S. primacy.

Mr. Gorbachev spent almost as much time speaking about his own internal troubles as about the Middle East and spoke only in vague generalities about the region.

Mr. Bush, in contrast, was detailed and precise. Backing a long-standing Israeli demand, he said Arab-Israeli peace had to be total, including diplomatic ties, trade relations, cultural exchanges and tourism.

Israel suspects that some Arab states, notably Syria, are prepared to offer it only non-belligerency. The Israelis have persistently complained that Egypt, with whom they signed a peace treaty in 1979, kept relations cold and prevented the growth of contact between the two peoples.

"Now is the ideal moment for the Arab World to demonstrate that attitudes have changed, that the Arab World is willing to live in peace with Israel and make allowances for Israel's reasonable security needs," Mr. Bush said.

U.S. officials believe that if any progress is to be made, ordinary people in the Middle East, particularly in democratic Israel, will at some stage to force hardline governments to moderate their views.

That is why Mr. Bush spoke at length of the consequences of allowing the negotiations to fail, painting a future of "violence and waste and tragedy."

'Geography cannot guarantee security and security does not come from military might alone'

Jordan is not Palestine

Following is the full text of Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber's speech at the Madrid conference as made available to the Jordan Times by Jordan Media Group:

It is with sincere appreciation that I thank the Governments of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for co-sponsoring this historic conference. For us this occasion represents what we must strive to make the final turning point, from a drift towards ultimate disaster for our peoples, our region and possibly the world to a new era of a properly constructed true peace, hope and life. All the parties to this most chronic and tragic conflict need your continued interest and support, together with the rest of the world, so that we may attain the just peace that the peoples of the region need and deserve.

We also salute His Majesty King Juan Carlos, the guardian of Spanish democracy, as well as Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, the Spanish Government and people for hosting the conference in Madrid. We thank them for their gracious hospitality and warm welcome.

This is an historic moment. The challenges and the issues before us are momentous. In his speech before the National Conference in Amman on 12th October, 1991, His Majesty King Hussein identified the essence of the challenge when he spoke of the possibilities of true peace and its implications for the future of the children of Abraham, Jews and Arabs alike. It is worthy of note that Spain seeks to honour Arabs and Jews in 1992 in the context of the contributions of the Andalus and Sephard. Together they generously contributed to a rich civilisation, the fruits of which not only Spain but the world and humanity have since appreciated.

It is not impossible to hope that this conference will herald the dawn of a new era to rectify the mistakes of the past. Perhaps the possibility of joint contribution is again at hand. Everyone must remember that God has created mankind and made them nations and tribes so that they may know each other. The most honoured in the sight of Allah is the most pious (The Holy Quran, Sura 49/13). And if this conference does anything it must end Israel's self-righteous attitude to live by its own rules alone. This conference is also about the credibility of international law, the United Nations Charter and human rights.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Jordan comes to this conference in good faith. Our vision is not merely an end to hostility — another truce — but a comprehensive, just and permanent peace. Our region has known nothing but instability and violence since the turn of the century. It is about time that it enjoys peace.

What is needed is not only sight but vision — vision to stand on top of the hill, not in the valley, so as to enable ourselves to look into the futures and to evaluate the consequences of the absence of peace. For far too long the peoples of the region have been locked in the groove of their own historical animosities, suspicions and acrimony.

That is why we in Jordan register our appreciation for the endeavour of President Bush as well as the support of President Gorbachev. It is our hope that the personal interest and support of both will remain, even increase, throughout the negotiations.

We come to this conference standing on strong moral grounds, buttressed by a record of moderation and wise vision since the creation of our state in modern times. The most tragic conflict which we are now addressing is one of the oldest on the agenda of the United Nations and though it may appear regional, its international dimensions are many and obvious. It is especially so against the background of the Gulf crisis in that it severely tests the credibility of the United Nations and that of the five permanent members of the Security Council. It was in the wake of the Gulf crisis that President Bush undertook to work seriously toward its resolution. We also appreciate the Soviet co-sponsorship of the effort as well as the support of the European Community. We take heart that this whole enterprise is firmly anchored in international legitimacy as embodied in United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 providing for the exchange of land for peace.

While it was true that most Arabs, out of a sense of outrage and feelings of injustice and betrayal, have refused since 1947 to contemplate accommodation, there were others in the Arab World who were willing to be counted for peace. Over the decades of the thirties, forties and beyond, indeed until the present moment, the arena was abandoned to the radicals.

In the clash of ideas, visions and armies that have ensued since then, reason, often humanity itself, was pushed beyond the frontiers of choice. The situation deteriorated to the condition of a primitive state of nature, where brute force replaced civilised behaviour, where might replaced right. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which I have the honour to represent, has been since the outset of this conflict, on the side of every effort to seriously solve it peacefully. King Hussein was actively involved in the formulation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, a foundation of this conference.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today we have an historic opportunity for peace in a land that has not tasted it for a long time. We must remember that the extremists and the rejectionists who speak in absolute terms are still lurking in the wings. It is from there that they issue their often repeated clichés and venomous threats.

In as much as peace is a good in itself, as an inherent value, it is also a battle against the absolutist ideologies invoking ancient hatreds. Many think that the situation should not be resolved but left to future generations to deal with. Those of vision, however, see it differently. Considering the immediacy of the need to reach a settlement at this particular moment of world history with its interdependence between people and nations, King Hussein said:

"... We must be involved in the drive for peace because it concerns our present and future... otherwise, the outcome, God forbid will be ominous dangers..."

It is for this reason that it is important to emphasise transcending the present in the search for the future. To continue to be locked in the mental strait-jacket of absolutist ideologies means that there will never be a way out of the shackles of hatred.

We take to heart and with respect the words of President Bush in his 6th of March, 1991 address before the American Congress, when he said:

"... I expressed my hope that out of the horrors of war might come new momentum for peace. We have learned in the modern age, geography cannot guarantee security and security does not come from military power alone... By now, it should be plain to all parties that peace-making in the Middle East requires compromise..."

Peace cannot, indeed must not, reflect the military balance of the belligerents now. It should, essentially, reflect the hope of a better future that will end, once and for all, our living in the midst of conflicting tragedies. It should bring us all in step with a new world that will shatter the shadow, the misery and the fog that engulfs our lives. It was Albert Einstein who said "... Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding..." It should not be a peace at any price but an honourable peace with which we and future generations can live: a durable peace which is the product of negotiations. It must be the outcome of mutual understanding and accommodation between the parties to the conflict without sacrificing rights or deviating from the principles of international law.

Jordan's position rests on the very simple yet direct assumption that in the end nothing is true but the truth; that a moral and just stand is ultimately more powerful than brute force. Although the world, and the Israelis themselves, know and are aware of our innocence of the crimes against the Jewish people, Israel's indignation outrage has not induced a sense of balanced justice. It has become our fate in Jordan to live with as well as to suffer and to contain the powerful forces of extremism. The Nazis and others unleashed the passions of injured Zionism for which the Palestinians and Jordan have paid the price.

God only knows the price we continue to pay for the sins of others. It has come to pass that our land, our culture, our people, even our very souls, as well as everything we hold dear and sacred, continue to be plundered and distorted to accommodate new realities and manufactured facts, brutally created on the ground.

And so it is that we not only ask what to do, but also welcome the present effort. The question is the more agonising as we in the Arab World, and in Jordan in particular, contemplate our situation. In Jordan three times in four decades, we had to make room for large waves of destitute and bewildered refugees forced out of their lands and homes.

We are aware, as are our people, that in the nature of things a negotiated settlement does represent total justice. Yet, with our traditional Jordanian moderation, rational approach, and consideration of our vision of the future, we have made consensus and balance a cornerstone of our political thesis since 1967. In the words of King Hussein:

"... Peace is essential to us in leading a normal life... we have made it a symbol for a better life for future generations... peace has become a national objective..."

That is why we think that the formula of land for peace brings more meaningfully true than any other principle or slogan. The echo of the drums of war reverberates in the heart and soul of the region. Is it not time that we, now on the threshold of the twenty first century, bring peace to our peoples?

Ladies and gentlemen,

Jordan enters this process from a position of moral strength, secure in the knowledge that reasonable men can reach reasonable solutions; that justice must ultimately prevail; that peace is indeed the master of all judgements, and its logic necessitates accommodation not belligerency. Otherwise, we may truly become one dimensional with neither soul nor spirit, driven by the primeval instincts of the political jungle, leading us to perish in perils of our own making.

We should shed the psychology of fear, get out of the shadow and realise that states too, like people, sometimes commit suicide because of their fear of life. More land is not more security. Occupation is against every legal principle and the shape it has taken in the Arab occupied territories contravenes the United Nations Charter and the Fourth Geneva Convention. The building of settlements and the expropriation of land are both in clear contravention of the rules of international law.

The justice that Jordan seeks requires resort to law; law that governs the actions of men and freeing them to live secure in a stable, ordered and institutionalised universe. That alone can assure the proper division of labour and resources and that alone can guarantee not only survival, but freedom and security. The technology of war has far out-distanced our true appreciation of its destructiveness and danger. Otherwise, how can we continue to contemplate our security in terms of missiles, nuclear, biological and chemical weapons? Our mission must transcend the issues of mere survival to become the search for a new future.

That is why His Majesty King Hussein, in his nation-wide speech of 12th October, 1991 solicited the help and support of the International Community in this process:

"Our cause is not only between us and Israel but also between the world and Israel... between the supremacy of international law... and the flouting of it... The whole world rejects what Israel's leadership is saying because it contravenes international legitimacy... Indeed, a relatively growing segment of Israelis are not too far from this world view..."

The King added, that our world today is "peace-oriented" and that the Arabs and the rest of the world will come together in their mutual desire and interests to find a peaceful solution.

That is one of the bases of the Jordanian position: a search for peace secure in the support of the entire Arab World, indeed the whole world community and in particular the Palestinians. We and the Palestinians have a just cause which must be addressed and resolved with equity and fairness.

Our second basis for entering this peace process is our expectation that there will be no asymmetry or double standards.

The third basis of the Jordanian approach is that our cause and that of our Palestinian brethren is intricately linked by ties of history, culture, religion, language, demography, geography, as well as human suffering and national aspirations. King Hussein has said that we would have preferred an independent Palestinian delegation though we have no objection to providing an umbrella for our Palestinian brethren, since we are keenly aware that both Jordanians and Palestinians are besieged as the parties directly and adversely affected by the continuation of the status quo of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Fourth, the peace we seek must be based on United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 and 338. The objective is real peace. We must emphasise that our understanding of Resolution 242 is that it is based on the principle of land for peace. The deliberations preceding its adoption and in which Jordan participated were based on that principle. Our position is firmly based on United Nations resolutions and international law. We are aware that Israel's creation was the result of United Nations Resolution 181 of 29th November, 1947. It is in accordance with the strength of these resolutions as well as the general principles of international law that Jordan demands the total withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied Jordanian, Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese Lands.

The three dimensions of the Jordanian position — the

Jordanian, Palestinian and regional — are founded on international law. Resolution 242 is a valid international instrument unanimously agreed upon by the International Community. It is binding on all member states of the United Nations in accordance with Article 25 of the United Nations Charter. Arab sovereignty must be restored in Arab Jerusalem. In the context of peace, Jerusalem will represent the essence and symbol of peace between the followers of the three great monotheistic religions. It is God's will that has made the historic city important to them all.

The illegal settlements should be removed and not augmented; the issue of Palestinian refugees and that of the displaced must be solved in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. The Palestinian people must be allowed to exercise their right of self-determination in their ancestral homeland. The fulfilment of these demands is a question of the credibility of United Nations resolutions. Let me speak plainly — Jordan has never been Palestine and is not so now.

Withdrawal from Lebanon and the application of United Nations Security Council Resolution 425 is also an essential prerequisite for the establishment of a regional peace.

Fifth, the peace we seek as a result of negotiations is a permanent one, a just and comprehensive peace — peace that will focus on region-wide issues such as arms control and regional security, settlements, water, the environment, the fate of the Palestinian refugees and the displaced, and the economic balance among the peoples of the area through joint development programmes. Peace must mean security for all, protected by all in their hearts and souls because it is founded on justice and honour.

Sixth, our position is also predicated on our vision of a better future that will replace the present bitterness and frustration and, in the words of King Hussein:

"... Enable us to transform these realities into positive forces that will take us from despair to hope, from confrontation and the four decades of suffering, anxiety and pain that accompanied it, and which left an imprint on our lives, to peace and its promise of security, stability, opportunities and prosperity for all; from the no-war-no-peace situation and its real dangers, to a condition of certainty and ease which will enhance the creativity and hopes of the younger generation..."

We seek a real peace where men, women and children do not have to cower behind fortresses. Our quest is for an honourable peace that would enable our peoples to tear down the walls of fear and hatreds, as people tore down the Berlin Wall. We want our peoples to welcome a new dawn and to enjoy the warmth of a new day, rather than the long night of darkness, which has been their fortune until now.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is our hope, that the world appreciates and supports our position based as it is on our liberal and peaceful Jordanian experiment in socio-economic and political development. An experiment that deserves support as it continues the Jordanian tradition of democratisation, institutionalisation and the transition to political pluralism. The test, indeed the challenge of peace, is both domestic and global in that it severely exacerbates our current economic crisis, as we are compelled to absorb a third wave of returnees in the wake of the Gulf crisis.

We hope that this peace conference will work toward the solution of all these momentous problems leading not only to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Arab occupied lands including Arab Jerusalem, but also to the delineation of Israel's permanent borders and finally real peace.

We have taken a bold step which commits us to innovative thinking that will bring peace and prosperity to the region. The parties to the conflict suffer from too many recollections of their wounded cultures. Somehow we must endeavour to bring about the change needed. We cannot continue to inhabit two different universes in this small space of land with its limited resources. Already there is too much ideological rigidity that continues to be an obstacle to sensible and rational life. For those who continue to think in absolute terms we must emphasise that while history may have time, men are mortal; that not only our civilisations need their wounds to be healed, but the very land scarred by the march of armies to the drums of war, needs mending as well. There exists a limit to force and this may be the moment to heal not only the mental agony but also to remove the physical trenches dug deep in the land. This requires patience, perseverance and wisdom deeper than mere intelligence.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is fitting to end this statement with a verse from the Holy Quran.

"Let not a people's enmity towards you incite you to act contrary to justice; Be always just, that is closest to righteousness." (The Holy Quran, Sura 5-8).

Shamir calls on Arabs to make peace, but fails to say how

Address by Yitzhak Shamir, prime minister of Israel, at the peace conference in Madrid, Oct. 31, 1991:

Distinguished Co-Chairmen, Ministers, Members of Delegations to the Conference,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to represent the people of Israel at this historic moment; and a privilege to address this opening of peace talks between Israel and its Arab neighbours.

I would like to express our profound appreciation to our Spanish hosts for their hospitality, and for making this gathering for peace possible. In its two thousand years of wandering, the Jewish people paused here for several hundred years, until they were expelled 500 years ago. It was in Spain that the great Jewish poet and philosopher, Yehuda Halevi, expressed the yearning for Zion of all Jews, in the words:

"My heart is in the East,
while I am in the uttermost West."

I would also like to extend our appreciation to the co-sponsors of this conference — to the U.S., which has maintained a strong friendship with Israel in an alliance that has overcome occasional differences. And to the Soviet Union, which saved the lives of many Jews during the Second World War, and has now opened its gates to the repatriation of Jews to their ancient homeland.

The people of Israel look to this palace with great anticipation and expectation. We pray that this meeting will mark the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the Middle East; that it will signal the end of hostility, violence, terror and war; that it will bring dialogue, accommodation, coexistence and — above all — peace.

Distinguished Co-Chairmen, Ladies and Gentlemen;

To appreciate the meaning of peace for the people of Israel, one has to view today's Jewish sovereignty in the land of Israel against the background of our history.

Jews have been persecuted throughout the ages in almost every continent. Some countries barely tolerated us, others oppressed, tortured, slaughtered and exiled us.

This century saw the Nazi regime set out to exterminate us. The Sho'ah, the Holocaust, the catastrophic genocide of unprecedented proportions which destroyed a third of our people, became possible because no one defended us. Being homeless, we were also defenceless.

But it was not the Holocaust which made the world community recognise our rightful claim to the Land of Israel. In fact, the

rebirth of the state of Israel so soon after the Holocaust has made the world forget that our claim is immemorial. We are the only people who have lived in the land of Israel without interruption for nearly 4000 years; we are the only people, except for a short crusader kingdom, who have had an independent sovereignty in this land; we are the only people for whom Jerusalem has been a capital; we are the only people whose sacred places are only in the Land of Israel.

No nation has expressed its bond with its land with as much intensity and consistency as we have. For millennia our people repeated at every occasion the cry of the psalmist: "If I forget thee, Jerusalem, may my right hand lose its cunning." For millennia we have encouraged each other with the greeting, "next year in Jerusalem." For millennia our prayers, literature and folklore have expressed powerful longing to return to our land. Only Eretz-Yisrael, the Land of Israel, is our true homeland. Any other country, no matter how hospitable, is still a diaspora, a temporary station on the way home.

To others, it was not an attractive land. No one wanted it. Mark Twain described it only a hundred years ago as "a desolate country, which sits in sackcloth and ashes, a silent mournful expanse, which not even imagination can grace with the pomp of life."

The Zionist movement gave political expression to our claim to the Land of Israel. And in 1922, the League of Nations recognised the justice of this claim. It understood the compelling historic imperative of establishing a Jewish homeland in the Land of Israel. The United Nations Organisation reaffirmed this recognition after the Second World War.

Regrettably, the Arab leaders, whose friendship we wanted most, opposed a Jewish state in the region. With a few distinguished exceptions, they claimed that the Land of Israel is part of the Arab domain that stretches from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf.

In defiance of international law and legality, the Arab regimes attempted to overrun and destroy the Jewish state even before it was born. The Arab spokesman at the U.N. declared that the establishment of a Jewish state would cause a bloodbath which would make the slaughters of Genghis Khan pale into insignificance.

In its Declaration of Independence on May 15, 1948 stretched out its hand in peace to its Arab neighbours, calling for an end to

war and bloodshed. In response, seven Arab states invaded Israel. The U.N. resolution that partitioned the country was thus violated and effectively annulled.

The U.N. did not create Israel. The Jewish state came into being because the tiny Jewish community, in what was Mandatory Palestine, rebelled against foreign imperialist rule. We did not conquer a foreign land. We repulsed the Arab onslaught, prevented Israel's annihilation, declared its independence and established a viable state and government institutions within a very short time.

After their attack on Israel failed, the Arab regimes continued their fight against Israel with boycott, blockade, terrorism and outright war. Soon after the establishment of Israel, they turned against the Jewish communities in Arab countries. A wave of oppression, expropriation and expulsion caused a mass exodus of some 800,000 Jews from lands they had inhabited from before the rise of the Islam.

Most of these Jewish refugees, stripped of their considerable possessions, came to Israel. They were welcomed by the Jewish state. They were given shelter and support, and they were integrated into Israeli society together with half a million survivors of the European Holocaust.

The Arab regimes' rejection of Israel's existence in the Middle East, and the continuous war they have waged against it, are part of history. There have been attempts to rewrite this history, which depict the Arabs as victims and Israel as the aggressor. Like attempts to deny the Holocaust, they will fail. With the demise of totalitarian regimes in most of the world, this perversion of history will disappear.

In their war against Israel's existence, the Arab governments took advantage of the cold war. They enlisted the military, economic and political support of the Communist world against Israel, and they turned a local, regional conflict into an international powder-keg. This caused the Middle East to be flooded with arms, which fuelled wars and turned the area into a dangerous battleground and a testing arena for sophisticated weapons. At the U.N., the Arab states mustered the support of other Muslim countries and the Soviet Bloc. Together they had an automatic majority for countless resolutions that perverted history, paraded fiction as fact and made a travesty of the U.N. and its charter.

Arab hostility to Israel has also brought tragic human suffering to the Arab people. Tens of thousands have been killed and wounded. Hundreds of thousands of Arabs who lived in Mandatory Palestine were encouraged by their own leaders to flee from their homes. Their suffering is a blot on humanity. No decent person, least of all a Jew of this era, can be oblivious to this suffering.

Several hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs live in slums now as refugee camps in Gaza, Judea and Samaria. Attempts by Israel to rehabilitate and house them have been

defeated by Arab objections. Nor has their fate been any better in Arab states. Unlike the Jewish refugees who came to Israel from Arab countries, most Arab refugees were neither welcomed nor integrated by their hosts. Only the Kingdom of Jordan awarded them citizenship. Their plight has been used as a political weapon against Israel.

The Arabs who have chosen to remain in Israel — Christian, Muslim and Druze — have become full-fledged citizens enjoying equal rights and representation in the legislature, in the judiciary and in all walks of life.

We who over the centuries were denied access to our holy places, respect the religion of all faiths in our country. Our law guarantees freedom of worship and protects the holy places of every religion.

Distinguished Co-Chairmen, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand before you today in yet another quest for peace, not only on behalf of the state of Israel, but in the name of the entire Jewish people, that has maintained an unbreakable bond with the Land of Israel for almost 4000 years.

Our pursuit of accommodation and peace has been relentless. For us, the ingathering of Jews into their ancient homeland; their integration in our society and the creation of the necessary infrastructure are at the very top of our national agenda. A nation that faces such a gigantic challenge would most naturally desire peace with all its neighbours.

Since the beginning of Zionism, we have formulated innumerable peace proposals and plans. All of them were rejected. The first crack in the wall of hostility occurred in 1977 when the late President Anwar Sadat of Egypt decided to break the taboo and come to Jerusalem. His gesture was reciprocated with enthusiasm by the people and government of Israel, headed by Menachem Begin. This development led to the Camp David Accords and the Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel. Four years later, in May 1983, an agreement was signed with the lawful government of Lebanon. Unfortunately, this agreement was not fulfilled, because of outside intervention. But the precedent was set and we looked forward to courageous steps, similar to those of Anwar Sadat. Regrettably, not one Arab leader has seen fit to come forward and respond to our call for peace.

Today's gathering is a result of a sustained American effort, based on our own peace plan of May 1989 which, in turn, was founded on the Camp David Accords.

According to the American initiative, the purpose of this meeting is to launch direct peace negotiations between Israel and each of its neighbours, and multilateral negotiations on regional issues among all the countries of the region.

We have always believed that only direct, bilateral talks can

(Continued on page 6)

Palestinians speak with pain and pride

Following is the address of the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid Middle East peace conference, presented by Dr. Haider Abdul Shafi, head of the delegation.

Secretary Baker, Foreign Minister Paskin, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, ON behalf of the Palestinian delegation, I would like to extend our warmest gratitude to our host, the government of Spain, for its gracious hospitality, and to King Carlos and Prime Minister Gonzalez. We thank the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace conference for their relentless efforts in convening this conference. A special thanks is due from our delegation to the United Nations and to the nations of Europe and Scandinavia, for their consistent and principled support for the rights of the Palestinian people.

Ladies and gentlemen, We meet in Madrid, a city with the rich texture of history, to weave together the fabric in which joins our past with the future, to reaffirm a wholeness of vision, which once brought about a rebirth of civilisation and a world order based on harmony in diversity.

Once again, Christian, Muslim and Jew face the challenge of heralding a new era enshrined in global values of democracy, human rights, freedom, justice and security. From Madrid we launch this quest for peace, a quest to place the sanctity of human life at the centre of our world and to redirect our energies and resources from the pursuit of mutual destruction to the pursuit of joint prosperity, progress and happiness.

We, the people of Palestine, stand before you in fullness of our pain, our pride, and our anticipation, for we have long harboured a yearning for peace and a dream of justice and freedom. For too long the Palestinian people have gone unheeded, silenced and denied — our identity negated by political expediency, our struggle against injustice maligned, and our present existence subsumed by the past tragedy of another people.

Your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, for the greater part of this century, we have been victimised by the myth of "a land without a people," and described with impunity as "the invisible Palestinians." Before such willful blindness, we refused to disappear or to accept a distorted identity. Our intifada is a testimony to our perseverance and resilience, waged in a just struggle to regain our rights.

It is time for us to narrate our own story, to stand witness as advocates of a truth which has long been buried in the somnolence and conscience of the world. We do not stand before you as supplicants, but rather as the torch bearers who know that in our world of today, ignorance can never be an excuse. We seek neither an admission of guilt after the fact, nor vengeance for past inequities, but rather an act of will that would make a just peace a reality. We speak out, ladies and gentlemen, from the full conviction of the rightness of our cause, the verity of our history, and the depth of our commitment. Therein lies the strength of the Palestinian people today, for we have scaled the walls of fear and renounced and we wish to speak out with the courage and integrity that our narrative and history deserve.

The co-sponsors have invited us here today to present our case to reach out to "the other" with whom we have had to face a mutually exclusive reality on the land of Palestine. But even in the invitation to this peace conference, our narrative was distorted and our truth only partially acknowledged. The Palestinian people are one, rused by centuries of history in Palestine, bound together by a collective memory of shared sorrows and joys and sharing a unity of purpose and vision. Our songs and ballads, our folk tales and children's stories, the dialect of our jokes, the images of our poems, that hint of melancholy which colours even our happiest moments, are as important to us as the blood ties which link our families and clans.

Yet an invitation to discuss peace, the peace we all desire and need, comes to only a portion of our people. It ignores our national, historical, and organic unity. We come here wrenched from our sisters and brothers in exile to stand before you as the Palestinians under occupation, although we maintain that each of us represents the rights and interest of the whole. We have been denied the right to publicly acknowledge our loyalty to our leadership and system of government; but allegiance and loyalty cannot be censored or severed. Our acknowledged leadership is more than just the democratically chosen leadership of all the Palestinian people; it is the symbol of our national identity and unity — the guardian of our past, the protector of our present, and the hope of our future. Our people have chosen to entrust it with their history and the preservation of our precious legacy. This leadership has been clearly and unequivocally recognised by the community of nations, with only a few exceptions who had chosen, for so many years, shadow over substance.

Regardless of the nature and conditions of our oppression, whether the dispossession and dispersion of calls on the brutality and repression of the occupation, the Palestinian people cannot be torn asunder. They remain united, a nation wherever they are, or are forced to be.

And Jerusalem, ladies and gentlemen, that city which is not only the soul of Palestine but the cradle of three world religions, is tangible even in its claimed absence from our midst at the stage. Its apparent, though artificial, exclusion from this conference is a

denial of its right to seek peace and redemption, for it too has suffered from war and occupation. Jerusalem, the city of peace, has been barred from a peace conference and deprived of its calling. Palestinian Jerusalem, the capital of our homeland and future state, defines Palestinian existence — past, present and future — but itself has been denied a voice and an identity. Jerusalem defies exclusive possessiveness or bondage. Israel's annexation of Jerusalem remains both clearly illegal in the eyes of the world community and an affront to the peace that this city deserves.

We come to you from a tortured and a proud, though captive, people, having been asked to negotiate with our occupiers, but leaving behind the children of the intifada, and a people under occupation and under curfew, who enjoined us not to surrender or forget. As we speak, thousands of our brothers and sisters are languishing in Israeli prisons and detention camps, most detained without evidence, charge or trial, many cruelly mistreated and tortured in interrogation, guilty only of seeking freedom or daring to defy the occupation. We speak in their name and we say: Set them free.

As we speak, the tens of thousands who have been wounded or permanently disabled are in pain: Let peace heal their wounds. As we speak, the eyes of thousands of Palestinian refugees, deportees, and displaced persons since 1967, are haunting us, for exile is a cruel fate: bring them home. They have the right to return. As we speak, the silence demolished homes echoes through the halls and in our minds: we must rebuild our homes in our free state.

And what do we tell the loved ones of those killed by army bullets? How do we answer the questions and the fear in our children's eyes? For one out of three Palestinian children under occupation has been killed, injured or detained in the past four years. How can we explain to our children that they are denied education, our schools so often closed by army fiat? Or why their life is in danger for raising a flag in a land where even children are killed or jailed? What requiem can be sung for trees uprooted by army bulldozers? And, most of all, who can explain to those lands are confiscated and clear waters stolen, the message of peace? Remove the barbed wire, restore the land, and its life-giving water.

The settlements must stop now. Peace cannot be waged while Palestinian land is confiscated in myriad ways and the status of the occupied territories is being decided each day by Israeli bulldozers and barbed wire. This is not simply a position; it is an irrefutable reality. Territory for peace is a travesty when territory for illegal settlement is official Israeli policy and practice. The settlements must stop now.

In the name of the Palestinian people, we wish to directly address the Israeli people with whom we have had a prolonged exchange of pain: let us share hope instead. We are willing to live side by side on the land and the promise of the future. Sharing however, requires two partners willing to share as equals. Mutuality and reciprocity must replace domination and hostility for genuine reconciliation and coexistence under international legality. Your security and ours are mutually dependent, as entwined as the fears and nightmares of our children.

We have seen some of your best and at your worst, for the occupier can hide no secrets from the occupied, and we are witness to the toll that occupation has exacted from you and yours. We have seen you anguish over the transformation of your sons and daughters into instruments of a blind and violent occupation — and we are sure that at no time did you envisage such a role for the children whom you thought would forge your future. We have seen you look back in deepest sorrow at the tragedy of your past and look on in horror at the disfigurement of the victim turned oppressor. Not for this have you nurtured your hopes, dreams and your offspring.

This is why we have responded with solemn appreciation to those of you who came to offer consolation to our bereaved, to give support to those whose homes were being demolished, and to extend encouragement and counsel to those detained behind barbed wire and iron bars. And we have marched together, often choking together at the non-discriminatory tear gas or crying out in pain as the clubs descended on both Palestinian and Israeli alike. For pain knows no national boundaries, and no one can claim a monopoly on suffering.

We once formed a human chain around Jerusalem, joining hands and calling for peace. Let us today form a moral chain around Madrid and continue that noble effort for peace and the promise of freedom for our sons and daughters. Break through the barriers of mistrust and manipulated fears. Let us look forward in magnanimity and in hope.

To our Arab brothers and sisters, most of whom are represented here in this historic occasion, we express our loyalty and gratitude for their life-long support and solidarity. We are here together seeking a just and lasting peace whose cornerstone is freedom for Palestine, justice for the Palestinians, and an end to the occupation of all Palestinian and Arab lands. Only then can we really enjoy the fruits of peace: Prosperity, security and human dignity and freedom.

In particular, we address our Jordanian colleagues in our joint delegation. Our two peoples have a very special historic and

geographic relationship. Together, we shall strive to achieve peace. We will continue to strive for our sovereignty, justice, proceeding freely and willingly to prepare the grounds for a confederation between the two states of Palestine and Jordan, which can be a cornerstone for our security and prosperity.

To the community of nations on our fragile planet, to the nations of Africa and Asia, to the Muslim world, and particularly to Europe, on whose southern and neighbourly shores we meet today: from the heart of our collective struggle for peace, we greet you and acknowledge your support and recognition. You have recognised our rights and our government and have given us real support and protection. You have penetrated the distorting mist of racism, stereotyping and ignorance and committed the art of seeing the "invisible" and listening to the voice of the silenced. The Palestinians, under occupation and in exile, have become a reality in your eyes and, with courage and determination, you have affirmed the truth of our narrative. You have taken up our cause and our case, and we have brought you into our hearts. We thank you for caring and daring to know the truth — the truth which must set us all free.

To the co-sponsors and participants in this occasion of awe and challenge, we pledge our commitment to the principle of justice, peace and reconciliation based on international legitimacy and uniform standards. We shall persist in our quest for peace, to place before you the substance and determination of our people, often victimised but never defeated. We shall pursue our people's right to self-determination, to the exhilaration of freedom, and to the warmth of the sun as a nation among equals.

This is the moment of truth: You must have the courage to recognise it and the will to implement it for our truth can no longer be hidden away in the dark recesses of inadvertency or neglect. The people of Palestine look at you with a straightforward, direct gaze, seeking to touch your heart, for you have dared to stir up hopes that cannot be abandoned. You cannot afford to let us down, for we have lived up to the values you espouse, and we have remained true to our cause.

We, the Palestinian people, made the imaginative leap in the Palestine National Council of November 1988, during which the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) launched its peace initiative based on Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and declared Palestinian independence based on Resolution 181 of the United Nations, which gave birth to two states in 1948: Israel and Palestine. In December 1988, a historic speech before the United Nations in Geneva led directly to the launching of the Palestinian-American dialogue. Ever since then, our people have responded positively to every serious peace initiative and has done its utmost to ensure the success of this process. Israel, on the other hand, has placed many obstacles and barriers in the path of peace to negate the very validity of the process. Its illegal and frenzied settlement activity is the most glaring evidence of its rejectionism, the latest settlement being erected just two days ago.

These historic decisions of the Palestine National Council wrenched the course of history from inevitable confrontation and conflict towards peace and mutual recognition. With our own hands, and in an act of sheer will, we have molded the shape of the future of our people. Our parliament has articulated the message of a people with the courage to say "yes" to the challenge of history, just as it provided the reference, in its resolutions last month in Algiers and in the Central Council meeting this month in Tunis, to go forward to this historic conference. We cannot be made to bear the brunt of other people's "no." We must have reciprocity. We must have peace.

Ladies and gentlemen, in the Middle East there is no superfluous people outside time and place, but rather a state sorely missed by time and place — the state of Palestine. It must be born on "the land of Palestine to redeem the injustice of the destruction of its historical reality and to free the people of Palestine from the shackles of their victimisation. Our homeland has never ceased to exist in our minds and hearts, but it has to exist as a state on all the territories occupied by Israel in the war of 1967, with Jerusalem as its capital, in the context of that city's special status and its non exclusive character.

This state, in a condition of emergence, has already been a subject of anticipation for too long. It should take place today, rather than tomorrow. However, we are willing to accept the proposal for a transitional stage, provided interim arrangements are not transformed into permanent status. The time frame must be condensed to respond to the dispossessed Palestinians' urgent need for sanctuary and to the occupied Palestinians' right to gain relief from oppression and to win recognition of their authentic will. During this phase, international protection for our people is most urgently needed, and the *de jure* application of the Fourth Geneva Convention is a necessary condition. The phases must not prejudice the outcome; rather they require an internal momentum and motivation to lead sequentially to sovereignty. Bilateral negotiations on the withdrawal of Israeli forces, the dissolution of Israeli administration and the transfer of authority to the Palestinian people cannot proceed under coercion or threat in the current asymmetry of power. Israel must demonstrate its willingness to negotiate in good faith by immediately halting all settlement activity and land confiscation while implementing meaningful confidence-building measures. Without genuine prog-

ress, tangible constructive changes and just agreements during the bilateral talks, multilateral negotiations will be meaningless. Regional stability, security and development are the logical outcome of an equitable and just solution to the Palestinian question which remains the key to the resolution of wider conflicts and concerns.

In its confrontation of wills between the legitimacy of the people and the illegality of the occupation, the intifada's message has been consistent: to embody the Palestinian state and to build its institutions and infrastructure. We seek recognition for this creative impulse which nurtures within it the potential nascent state. We have paid a heavy price for daring to substantiate our authenticity and to practice popular democracy in spite of the cruelty of occupation. It was a sheer act of will that brought us here, the same will which asserted itself in the essence of the intifada, as the cry for freedom, an act of civil resistance, and people's participation and empowerment. The intifada is our drive towards nation building and social transformation. We are here today with the support of our people, who have given itself the right to hope and to make a stand for peace. We must recognise, as well, that some of our people harbour serious doubts and skepticism about this process. Within our democratic, social and political structures. We have evolved in respect for pluralism and diversity, and we shall guard the opposition's right to differ within the parameters of mutual respect and national unity.

The process launched here must lead us to the light at the end of the tunnel, and this light is the promise of a new Palestine — free, democratic, and respectful of human rights and the integrity of nature.

Self-determination, ladies and gentlemen, can neither be granted nor withheld at the whim of the political self-interest of other, for it is enshrined in all international charters and humanitarian law. We claim this right; we firmly assert it here before you and in the eyes of the rest of the world, for it is a sacred and inviolable right which we shall relentlessly pursue and exercise with dedication and self-confidence and pride.

Let us end the Palestinian-Israeli fatal proximity in this unnatural condition of occupation, which has already claimed too many lives. No dream of expansion or glory can justify the taking of a single life. Set us free to reengage as neighbours and as equals on our holy land.

To our people in exile and under occupation, who have sent us to this appointment laden with their trust, love and aspirations, we say that the load is heavy, and the task is great, but we shall be true. In the words of our great national poet, Mahmoud Darwish: "My homeland is not a suitcase, and I am no traveller." To the exiled and the occupied, we say: You shall return and you shall remain and we will prevail for our cause is just. We will put on our embroidered robes and kuffiyas and, in the sight of the world, and celebrate together on the day of liberation.

Refugee camps are no fit home for people who had been reared on the land of Palestine, in the warmth of the sun and freedom. The hail of Israeli bombs, almost daily pouring down on our defenceless civilian population in the refugee camps of Lebanon, is no substitute for the healing rain of the homeland. Yet, the international will had ensured their return in United Nations Resolution 194 — a fact willfully ignored and unexecuted.

Similarly, all other resolutions pertinent to the Palestinian question, beginning with Resolution 181, through Resolutions 242 and 338, and ending with Security Council Resolution 681, have, until now, been relegated to the domain of public debate, rather than real implementation. They form the larger body of legality, including all relevant provisions of international law, within which any peaceful settlement must proceed. If international legitimacy and the rule of law are to prevail and govern relations among nations, they must be respected and, impartially and uniformly, implemented. We, as Palestinians, require nothing less than justice.

To Palestinians everywhere today we bear in our hands the precious gift of your love and your pain, and we shall set it down gently here before the eyes of the world and say — there is a right here which must be acknowledged, the right to self-determination and statehood; there is strength and there the smell of burnt incense in the air Jerusalem, the collective human, cultural and spiritual memory and an aggression against its enduring symbols of tolerance, magnanimity, and respect for cultural and religious authenticity. The cobbled streets of the Old City must not echo with the discordant beat of Israeli military boots, we must restore to them the chant of the muezzin, the chimes of the church bells, and the prayers of all the faithful calling for peace in the City of Peace.

From Madrid, let us light the candle of peace and let the olive branch blossom. Let us celebrate the rituals of justice and rejoice in the hymns of truth, for the awe of the moment is a promise to the future, which we all must redeem. The Palestinians will be free, and will stand tall among the community of nations in the fullness of the pride and dignity which by right belongs to all people. Today, our people under occupation are holding high the olive branch of peace. In the words of Chairman Arafat in 1974 before the U.N. General Assembly: "Let not the olive branch of peacefulness from my hands." Let not the olive branch of peace fall from the hands of Palestinian people.

Shamir calls on Arabs to make peace, but fails to say how

(Continued from page 5)

bring peace. We have agreed to precede such talks with this ceremonial conference, but we hope that Arab consent to direct, bilateral talks indicates an understanding that there is no other way to peace. In the Middle East, this has special meaning, because such talks imply mutual acceptance; and the root cause of the conflict is the Arab refusal to recognise the legitimacy of the State of Israel.

The multilateral talks that would accompany the bilateral negotiations are a vital component in the process. In these talks, the essential ingredients of coexistence and regional cooperation will be discussed. There cannot be genuine peace in our region unless these regional issues are addressed and resolved.

We believe the goal of the bilateral negotiations is to sign peace treaties between Israel and its neighbours, and to reach an agreement on interim self-government arrangements with the Palestinian Arabs.

But nothing can be achieved without good will. I appeal to the Arab leaders, those who are here and those who have not yet joined the process: Show us and the world that you accept Israel's existence. Demonstrate your readiness to accept Israel as a permanent entity in the region. Let the people in our region hear you speak in the language of reconciliation, coexistence and peace with Israel.

In Israel there is an almost total consensus for the need for peace. We only differ on the best ways to achieve it. In most Arab countries the opposite seems to be true: the only differences are over the ways to push Israel into a defenceless position and, ultimately, to destruction. We would like to see in your countries an end to poisonous preachings against Israel. We would like to see an indication of the kind of hunger for peace which characterises Israeli society.

We appeal to you to renounce the Jihad against Israel. We appeal to you to denounce the PLO covenant which calls for Israel's destruction. We appeal to you to condemn declarations that call for Israel's annihilation, like the one issued by the rejectionist conference in Tehran last week. We appeal to you to let Jews, who wish to leave your countries, go.

And we address a call to the Palestinian Arabs: Renounce violence and terrorism; use the universities in the administered territories — whose existence was made possible only by Israel — for learning and development, not agitation and violence; stop exposing your children to danger by sending them to throw bombs and stones at soldiers and civilians.

Just two days ago, we were reminded that Palestinian terrorism is still rampant, when a mother of seven children and a father of four were slaughtered in cold blood. We cannot remain indifferent and be expected to talk with people involved in such

repulsive activities.

We appeal to you to shun dictators like Saddam Hussein who aim to destroy Israel; stop the brutal torture and murder of those who do not agree with you; allow us, and the world community, to build decent housing for the people who now live in refugee camps. Above all, we hope you finally realise that you could have been at this table long ago, soon after the Camp David accords were first concluded, had you chosen dialogue instead of violence, coexistence instead of terrorism.

Ladies and Gentlemen: We come to this process with an open heart, sincere intentions and great expectations. We are committed to negotiating without interruption until an agreement is reached. There will be problems, obstacles, crises and conflicting claims. But it is better to talk than to shed blood. Wars have not solved anything in our region. They have only caused misery, suffering, bereavement and hatred.

We know our partners to the negotiations will make territorial demands on Israel. But, as an examination of the conflict's long history makes clear, its nature is not territorial. It raged well before Israel acquired Judea, Samaria, Gaza and the Golan in a defensive war. There was no hint of recognition of Israel before that war in 1967, when the territories in question were not under Israel control.

We are a nation of 4 million. The Arab nations from the Atlantic to the Gulf number 170 million. We control only 28,000 square kilometres. The Arabs possess a land mass of 14 million square kilometres. The issue is not territory but our existence.

It will be regrettable if the talks focus primarily and exclusively on territory. It is the quickest way to an impasse. What we need, first and foremost, is the building of confidence, the removal of the danger of confrontation, and the development of relations in as many spheres as possible.

The issues are complex, and the negotiations will be lengthy and difficult. We submit that the best venue for the talks is in our region, in close proximity to the decision-makers, not in a foreign land. We invite our partners to this process to come to Israel for the first round of talks. On our part, we are ready to go to Jordan, Lebanon and to Syria for the same purpose. There is no better way to make peace than to talk in each other's home. Avoiding such talks is a denial of the purpose of the negotiations. I would welcome a positive answer from the representatives of these states here and now. We must learn to live together. We must learn to live without war, without bloodshed. Judaism has given the world not only the belief in one God, but the idea that all men and women are created in God's image. There is no greater sin than to

ravage this image by shedding blood.

I am sure that there is no Arab mother who wants her son to die in battle — just as there is no Jewish mother who wants her son to die in war. I believe every mother wants her children to learn the art of living, not the science of war.

For many hundreds of years, wars, deep antagonisms and terrible suffering cursed this continent on which we meet. The nations of Europe saw the rise of dictators and their defeat after lengthy and painful struggles. Now, they are together — former bitter enemies — in a united community. They are discussing the good of the community, co-operating in all matters, acting almost as one unit. I envy them. I would like to see such a community rise in the Middle East. And I believe that, despite all differences between us, we should be able, gradually, to build a united regional community. Today it is a dream — but we have seen, in our own lifetime, some of the most fantastic dreams become reality. Today, the gulf separating the two sides is still too wide; the Arab hostility to Israel too deep; the lack of trust too immense, to permit a dramatic, quick solution. But, we must start on the long road to reconciliation with this first step in the peace process.

We are convinced that human nature prefers peace to war and belligerence. We, who have had to fight seven wars and sacrifice many thousands of lives, glorify neither death nor war. The Jewish faith exalts peace even to the extent that it considers it a synonym for the Creator Himself. We yearn for peace. We pray for peace.

We believe the blessing of peace can turn the Middle East into a paradise; a centre of cultural, scientific, medical and technological creativity. We can foresee a period of great economic progress that would put an end to misery, hunger and illiteracy. It could put the Middle East — the cradle of civilisation — on the road to a new era.

Such a goal merits our devotion and dedication for as long as it is necessary until, in the words of the Prophet Isaiah, we shall be able to turn "swords into ploughshares" and bring the blessings of peace to all the peoples of our region.

Let me conclude with the words of the same prophet: "Peace, peace, both for far and near, says the Lord"

Distinguished Co-Chairmen, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us resolve to leave this hall with a united determination that from now on, any differences we may have will be solved only by negotiations, goodwill and mutual tolerance. Let us declare, here and now, an end to war, to belligerence and to hostility. Let us march forward together, to reconciliation and peace.

Arabs see Shamir speech as negative

(Continued from page 1)

Reuters.

Jaber said he was cautiously optimistic about the results. The spokesman for the Jordanian delegation to the conference, Dr. Marwan Munasher, told the press that Mr. Shamir's speech was very negative in nature and represented a distorted image of the historic facts.

"The aim of the peace conference is to talk about the future and the implementation of U.N. resolutions and not to talk about the past," Dr. Munasher said. "We were very disappointed," said Dr. Munasher. "We had hoped he would leave us an opening for compromise. He gave us no vision for the future."

Faisal Hussein, chairman of an advisory group accompanying the Palestinian team, said: "We hope that this stance will not be the permanent stance." "We have certain doubts with regard to the real Israeli position," said Mr. Hussein, referring to statements earlier this week by Mr. Shamir hinting at a compromise.

Hanan Ashwari, the Palestinian spokeswoman, said that Mr. Shamir's speech "brought nothing new. It was a reiteration of the same old entrenched positions."

"He brought to this conference the tone and attitude of the occupier," she said, accusing Mr. Shamir of "racism and distortion."

"He did not make a single conciliatory gesture to the Palestinians," she said. "On the contrary, he told us what we had to do."

"My first impression about Shamir's speech is that it contains a lot of faking of facts and defaming history," Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa told Israel.

Mr. Aghazarian said: "I would have liked to hear him admit that Palestinians in the occupied territories are suffering. It's not just a question of shaking hands or meeting in Amman, there are more central issues."

"It is high time, if the (Palestinian) people are willing to reach an arrangement, that he is more forthcoming," he added.

Peace Now, Israel's largest peace movement, earlier sent Mr. Shamir a message asking him to offer a halt to settlements and other concessions in exchange for an end to the Arab boycott of Israel and to guerrilla attacks on

Passions beneath erupt at Jordanian briefing in Madrid

By Dalia Baligh
The Associated Press

MADRID — The passions repressed at the formal opening of the Middle East conference spilled over in a free-wheeling dialogue Wednesday between Israeli and American journalists and Jordan's foreign minister.

"I wish to welcome you and to receive answers from you — excuse me, to receive questions from you, and hopefully also some answers," said Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber, setting the tone for what diplomats would call a frank and friendly exchange.

Dr. Abu Jaber, a white-haired 59-year-old political scientist, gave a performance that contrasted sharply with the icy atmosphere in the conference chamber.

He spoke off-the-cuff and from the heart, gesturing, smacking his fist into his palm. Many of the questions came from Israeli reporters, and the give-and-take was much more emotional than a normal news conference is supposed to be.

A radio reporter, telling

Dr. Abu Jaber he was live on the air in the Jewish state, asked whether he was prepared to come to Israel to negotiate.

The location did not matter, Dr. Abu Jaber said.

"We are talking about issues that have been in the hearts of men and in the minds of men. We are talking about rigid ideologies. We are talking about hatred. We are talking about a struggle that has lasted for at least 100 years, six or seven wars, a lot of atrocities."

"So the idea of whether we go here or there, I think it is a matter of procedure, it is not a substantive matter."

When another reporter asked whether Jordan wanted real peace, based on mutual security and direct negotiations, Dr. Abu became indignant.

"We want security, but I mean everybody forgets that we in Jordan and we in Syria, the Palestinian people are screaming for security."

"Now let us look at the balance of power in the Middle East, gentlemen — ladies and gentlemen — I mean, who should ask for security?"



Kamel Abu Jaber

We are the ones who are asking for it. We do not have 300 atomic or nuclear weapons. You know the recent book by Mr. Seymour Hersh, Samson's Choice. We demand security because we are afraid too."

Mr. Hersh, the Pulitzer prize-winning investigative reporter, says in the book that Israel has atomic weapons and considered using them in the 1973 Middle East war. Israel has never confirmed or denied having

the bomb.

On the question of shaking hands with prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Dr. Abu Jaber showed good-humored exasperation.

"Everybody is so obsessed with the idea of shaking hands. I mean, you know, there are millions of people in the world I don't shake hands with," he said, drawing a laugh.

Indeed, he added, he might one day clasp Mr. Shamir's hand: "When things fall in place, when we reach settlement, when our rights are recognised, when the Palestinian people are recognised and their self-determination, when Jerusalem — Arab Jerusalem — is returned to Arab sovereignty..."

A reporter from the Jerusalem Post asked whether President George Bush's call for "territorial compromise" applied to Arabs as well as Israelis.

"Whose land is occupied, sir?" The foreign minister said. "Syrian lands are occupied, the Golan Heights. Lebanese lands are occupied, Palestinian lands are occupied, and indeed Jordanian

land. So I mean what are we supposed to compromise, more land?"

Dr. Abu Jaber said he hoped to achieve a settlement "that I can live with, that when I look in the mirror I am not ashamed of myself."

"That when my daughter asks me, or my grandchild asks me, I can tell to him, look, I took the risks, I put my heart on my hand to take peace, because it does take courage to make peace. But we can't do it alone, the other side must reciprocate."

At the end, a reporter said: "We're not saying that you have to kiss Mr. Shamir, but you even made a Freudian slip and said maybe you'll take an answer from the press. Why don't you start with that small step and shake his hand tomorrow?"

But Dr. Abu Jaber returned to the point, saying with a laugh: "I mean, why should I kiss him for God's sake?"

"Would you shake his hand?"

Dr. Abu Jaber left the question hanging and left the podium.



Yasser Arafat

'Arafat approved Palestinian speech'

MADRID (AP) — A spokesman for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), has confirmed that aides to Yasser Arafat had been in contact with the Palestinian delegation at the Middle East peace talks, and helped write its speech for Thursday's session.

"We have made contact with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat by telephone and in those contacts we decided on the final text of the speech that will be delivered by the leader of the Palestinian delegation to the talks, Haidar Abdul Shafi," Ahmad Abdul Rahman told the Associated Press.

Mr. Abdul Rahman, who arrived in Madrid Tuesday, declined to say how the final text was given to the leader of the delegation.

The PLO connection to the delegation is an open secret. But Faisal Hussein and Hanan Ashrawi, the leading advisers to the delegation, has said they would abide by ground rules which stressed the exclusion of the PLO from any role.

Israel has refused to deal with the PLO.

Mr. Hussein and Dr. Ashrawi were the key negotiators with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in the eight months leading up to the conference. But they were excluded from the 14-member delegation at Israel's insistence, mainly because they both are open supporters of the PLO.

Abdul Rahman's statement to the AP appeared to be a conscious decision to raise the organisation's profile here.

The Israelis are already irritated that the Palestinians were granted a full-45-minute speech instead of sharing time with their Jordanian partners.

Mr. Abdul Rahman noted that a PLO observer delegation in Madrid was led by Nabil Shaath, the political adviser to Mr. Arafat who heads the political committee of the Palestine National Council.

He said Mr. Shaath was instrumental in working out the final text of the speech.

Earlier, delegation sources here admitted that the PLO was paying its expenses in Madrid, but refused to give details of the amount. The accommodation includes \$150-a-night hotel rooms, meals and telecommunications for the 70 to 75 delegates, advisers, secretaries and security guards.

The Israelis have gone ahead with the conference despite reminders of the PLO's influence with the delegation across the table.

Palestinian delegate Saeb Erekat and previously provoked Israelis by saying that the entire delegation was chosen by the PLO. He made a further challenge to Israel Wednesday, arriving at the conference room wearing a black-and-white Palestinian headscarf.

Mr. Hussein and Dr. Ashrawi met with Mr. Baker Wednesday. They excluded from the 14-member delegation attending the Mideast conference at Israel's insistence, mainly because they both openly support the PLO.

DFLP assails talks

A hardline PLO group heaped scorn on the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks saying they were assembled to meet Israeli conditions and did not represent their compatriots.

The Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), led by Nayef Hawatmeh, said in a statement that the Palestinian team at the Madrid conference had no right to sign any agreement related to the Palestinian problem.

"The team does not represent the will of the Palestinian people who are inside and outside the occupied territories," said the statement issued at the end of a two-day congress.

"We regret that the delegation also stayed away from declaring any links to the PLO because they fell under American and Israeli pressures," it added.

More hostages to be freed 'despite Madrid talks'

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Pro-Iranian kidnappers will soon free more Western hostages held in Lebanon despite Tehran's fierce opposition to Middle East peace talks in Madrid, a Lebanese political source said Thursday.

"The Madrid conference and the harsh Iranian and Muslim (fundamentalists) position regarding it will not hamper efforts to end the hostage crisis," said the source, just back from talks with officials in Tehran.

"To the contrary, it will speed up the current process and more hostages will be freed very soon," he added.

He attributed the Iranian decision to cooperate with the U.N.-mediated drive to exchange Middle East hostages to "the current huge political changes in the region and the world that led to the peace conference in the first place."

Tehran and pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon have condemned the U.S.-brokered Madrid talks and described the Arab participation as treason.

"The expected release of the hostages will not be a gift to the Americans, but rather a relief from a burden," the source said. "The hostage card has expired. Nothing will change that," he added.

The source said: "The continued detention of the hostages isn't profitable any more. It would lead to Iran's isolation while releasing them for humanitarian reasons would improve its image."

"The current situation in the region requires new ways and means of confronting American policies."

Pro-Iranian kidnappers have released two American and two British hostages since August and Israel has freed 66 Arab prisoners and handed over the bodies of nine guerrillas.

Up to eight Westerners, including four Americans, two Germans and a Briton, are still held by extremists loyal to Iran. Security sources believe a ninth, Italian Alberto Molinari, is dead.

The source said all remaining hostages could be released together if Israel agreed to free all Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners and the Tehran received confirmed information on the fate of four Iranian diplomats, kidnapped in Lebanon in 1982.

The diplomats are believed to have been killed by Christian militiamen.

Israel has said it needs information on a missing pilot, Ron Arad, before releasing more of the 300 Arabs it holds.

Pro-Iranian leaders say they do not know the whereabouts of Arad, shot down in South Lebanon in 1986 and captured alive.

Exchange of fire in south

Israeli troops and their militia allies, on alert for possible raids by guerrillas opposed to the Madrid peace talks, exchanged artillery fire with guerrillas in South Lebanon Thursday, security sources said.

No fists shaken, but no hands shaken either

MADRID (R) — When Amr Musa, Egypt's foreign minister, met Yitzhak Shamir after the opening session of the Mideast peace conference, he chided the Israeli prime minister for not applauding his speech.

Mr. Shamir, according to his spokesman, grabbed Mr. Musa's hand in a warm embrace and joked: "This is a confidence-building measure."

Wednesday's ceremonial session could have used a few more such gestures. Handshakes were few, and mostly confined among those already at peace.

The Arabs professed to be baffled by the media's interest in what they did with their hands.

"Everybody is so obsessed with the idea of shaking hands. I mean, you know, there are millions of people in the world I don't shake hands with," Jordanian Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber said in good-humored exasperation at a news conference.

The Israelis shook hands with their Egyptian and American friends, while on the other side of the conference table, there were handshakes among the Syrians, Jordanians and Palestinians. But none of them reached across the table.

Eliakim Rubinstein, an Israeli delegate, said he shook hands with a Lebanese.

Another Israeli, Sarah Doron, said she approached Isabelle Eddé, an adviser to Lebanon's foreign minister.

"I held out my hand, but she just turned away," Ms. Doron said. "I was disappointed and perplexed. ...we came here to speak about peace. This is a symbol, and in symbols there's a lot of meaning."

Israeli gunners and South Lebanese Army (SLA) militiamen shelled Hizbollah (Party of God) bases in a string of villages near the market town of Nabatiyyah and the mountainous ridge of Iqlim Al Toufah during the night and early in the morning.

Hizbollah guerrillas returned fire on Israeli and SLA positions at the tip of the Jewish state's self-declared "security zone" in South Lebanon, the sources said.

Israeli combat planes staged mock raids on two Palestinian refugee camps east of the port of Sidon and Iqlim Al Toufah, 40 kilometres south of Beirut. Israeli helicopters also hovered over the area.

There were no immediate reports of casualties in the latest exchanges, less intense than those of the past two days, the sources said.

Two attacks by pro-Iranian guerrillas Monday killed three Israeli soldiers and wounded six, sparking the latest round of violence. Two guerrillas and two civilians were killed in the clashes and retaliatory shelling.

Dozens of villagers, fearing an escalation of the shelling, have fled their homes near Israeli and SLA positions, witnesses say.

Hizbollah and some Palestinian groups have vowed to intensify their guerrilla war against Israel to sabotage the Middle East peace talks.

About 10,000 Hizbollah members, chanting "We will fight" and "Death to America, death to Israel," marched in Beirut on Wednesday to condemn the Madrid conference and the Arab delegations.

The Lebanese government, whose participation at the peace conference angered extremists, wants to secure an unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the south.

Khaddam visits Beirut

Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam made an unscheduled visit Thursday to discuss with Lebanese leaders the Arab-Israeli peace talks, government sources said.

Mr. Khaddam, escorted by the commander of Syria's military intelligence in Lebanon Brigadier General Ghazi Kana'an, drove to President Elias Hrawi's residence in Beirut at 12:15 p.m. (10:15 GMT).

Mr. Khaddam refused to talk to reporters before going into a meeting with Mr. Hrawi. The meeting was also attended by Prime Minister Omar Karami, house speaker Hussein Hussein and Defence Minister Michel Murr.

Mr. Hrawi kept Khaddam for lunch after which the two went into another round of talks.

Syria is the main power broker in Lebanon with 40,000 troops deployed in most of the nation since 1976 under a peacekeeping mandate from the 21-nation Arab League to end the 16-year-old civil war.

No fists shaken, but no hands shaken either

To the Israelis and Arabs watching live TV transmissions, back home, a few handshakes among enemies could have had a profound psychological impact.

Nothing so dramatically drove home the fact of Israel's peace treaty with Egypt as the 1979 photo of Jimmy Carter, Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin sharing a complex three-way handshake.

Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's deputy foreign minister, said he would have liked to walk up and shake hands, but sensed the Arabs backing off. He surmised that they might be daunted by the threats of extremists to kill the Arabs who attend the conference.

One questioner reminded Dr. Abu Jaber that U.S. and Soviet leaders shook hands even at the height of the cold war.

"You come back again and again to this matter of kissing Mr. Shamir. Why should I kiss him?" the white-haired 59-year-old Jordanian replied.

Arab males traditionally greet each other with embraces and kisses. Israelis suffice with handshakes, or a quick hug for special friends.

Dr. Abu Jaber said he had come to Madrid with "an open heart." Semadar Peri, an Israeli journalist, asked if that meant he would shake Israeli hands. Dr. Abu Jaber said it would have to wait until peace was reached.

The issue came up earlier this month when Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa was asked if he would shake his Israeli counterpart's hand at the conference. He said he wouldn't, because that hand was "guilty" of mistreating the Arabs.

Syrian papers see U.S., Soviet speeches supportive of Arabs

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria's state-controlled newspapers on Thursday interpreted the opening statements at the Middle East peace conference in Madrid as supportive of Arab views.

On the second day of the conference many people tuned to foreign radio and television stations as on the first day to hear or see live broadcasts of the speeches.

The opening address by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir was being simultaneously translated into Arabic by some radios. This sparked immediate reactions and guffaws from listeners to some of Mr. Shamir's statements.

"What about you?" was a popular remark by many Syrians to an appeal by Mr. Shamir to the Arab World to recognise and accept the existence of Israel in the region.

"Why don't you accept and recognise the Palestinians as equals," reacted one Palestinian refugee, Adnan Oudsi, as other people listening to the live broadcast nodded.

"The ball is now in the Israeli court and the Israelis should not swim against the international tide," commented the daily Tishrin.

Two other papers, Al Thawra and Al Baath, used banner headlines to quote statements by the U.S. and Soviet presidents and the European Community (EC) representative at the conference.

Al Thawra's main headline said "Hopes raised on first day of conference."

A secondary headline said: "No peace without Israeli withdrawal and halt to settlements."

Al Baath's headline quoted President George Bush as saying "we work for a just and permanent settlement and negotiations on the basis of 242 and 338."

Al Baath also headlined the call by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev for "respect for the rights of the Palestinian people."

Commenting editorially Tishrin said: "It has become clear from the opening of the conference that to pulling back from the path of peace would leave the region at daggers drawn. Going back on the peace process is unthinkable."

Al Baath noted that "Israel is still holding on to its intransigent stands, refusing to halt settlement activity and adhering to the con-

tinuing occupation of Arab land."

"Will Israel continue its rejectionist stand, or succumb to the international will?" the paper asked.

In Madrid, Syria's foreign minister said that Israel is making an issue of the site for face-to-face talks with its Arab neighbours in an effort to derail the peace process.

Farouk Al Sharaa insisted the bilateral talks be held in Madrid after the initial three-day meeting and said moving the negotiations to the Middle East could inflame passions.

"My feeling is that when the Israelis raise such an issue they have in mind to undermine the peace process that would follow the peace conference," he said in an interview with the U.S. Cable News Network.

"Even if we moved into another place, they would create another problem of another nature. Our impression is that the Israelis are not coming here to make peace."

Al Sharaa said all the parties at the peace conference had agreed on Madrid as the site for the peace conference "and we have to continue here."

The Israelis say they want to hold the bilateral negotiations in the Middle East, but Mr. Sharaa said that could be dangerous.

"That would raise emotions which might not be helpful to achieve results," he said.

Some Syrian delegates privately expressed disappointment with President Bush's opening speech, which did not mention their demand for return of the Golan Heights.

Mr. Sharaa, however, viewed the speech more positively.

"I think he spoke about the Syrian Golan, and in his speech it is not necessary that he speaks about details," Mr. Sharaa said.

He said the United States has provided Syria with assurances that a settlement of the Israeli-Arab conflict would be based on the return of Arab lands taken in 1967.

"And I don't think, or even imagine, that President Bush would back away from these commitments, whether he mentioned them in the speech or not," Mr. Sharaa said.

Madrid answers first question: 'Who are the Palestinians?'

By Daoud Kuttab
Special to the Jordan Times

MADRID - IT was a special day for me by all means. Whether it was the large keffiyeh that adorned Saeb Erekat's shoulders as he sat in the front row of the opening session defying the Israelis who wanted to exclude him because he dared state the obvious — that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is the group that had chosen the Palestinian delegation; or if it was that special Palestinian national spirit that let Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi wear the beautifully Palestinian embroidered suit jacket at her first official press conference defying in it what another woman had said nearly 20 years ago. She had challenged Golda Meir's now almost forgotten statement when she asked "Who are the Palestinians?"

For me however, the clothes that Dr. Erekat and Dr. Ashrawi were wearing was not as important as the content of what was happening; that Palestine was represented by its people who had come with an open mind to discuss for the first time in more than 40 years their own destiny by themselves.

That momentous political and symbolic moment at the opening was still not the highlight. For me the highlight was the second session to which Palestinian journalists were invited as part of the pool system. This pool system was not part of a general pool. The Palestinian delegation was given a number of cards permitting their journalists to enter the palace and record the moments of history being made. To some of us our mere presence at that place was as much history as the conference itself. We took pictures of ourselves at

the empty conference room before other delegates entered. It was almost not important what pictures or stories we were too excited with being there to think of things such as reporting.

The excitement of Palestinian journalists were not any less than the excitement of the delegates. I took special concern to take the photos and try to talk to Sameh Kanaan, the Palestinian fighter who had been imprisoned more than half the years of his life. He sat there with the full excitement of a fighter that had reached a long awaited goal. At the end of the first session he came towards me and asked if I could take his picture. I said OK. He responded by asking me a strange question. "Make sure that (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Shamir is in the same picture?" At the time Shamir had turned his back talking to an Israeli delegate. Maybe that was just fine with Kanaan. What he wanted was that his presence in the same room as Mr. Shamir be recorded. When I asked him his feelings he gave me the answer to the strange request. I am happy to be here. I am in this room meeting face to face with the prime minister of the government that has oppressed me and my people for many years. The excitement inside the halls of the conference did not end with Mr. Kanaan's articulation.

As we went back to the press centre we were again taken by the special bus that had brought us to the palace. As before we were escorted by motorcycles that led the way. But this time they were making a lot more noise. Madrid streets were jammed and our escorts wanted to break the deadlock. The Spanish soldier riding the



Hanan Ashrawi

motorcade turned his siren on moved into the empty opposite land and we were escorted through the busy streets of Madrid like a presidential motorcade. For two of my fellow Palestinian journalists this was heaven on earth. A colleague, Jawdat Mana'a, joked out loud that if when he went back to Dheishah camp near Bethlehem he would once again be restricted by an Israeli curfew or whether he could continue to bask in the freedom and exuberance he had felt as our bus was led freely through the streets of Madrid.

Interestingly enough, Mr. Mana'a was one of 13 Palestinian journalists who made an official request to interview Mr. Shamir in Madrid.

The Israelis refused to grant the interview saying that he might give an interview to Palestinians in Jerusalem. The problem and irony of course is that some of those Palestinian journalists are not allowed to enter Jerusalem for security reasons.

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plexity of Middle East politics and the extreme sensitivity of the State Department, which feared potential rows or competing interests could sabotage the historic peace conference.

Ms. Starr said Syria had made clear in August that if Israel attended the water summit, Damascus would not be represented and other Arab states would also be pressured to stay away.

Washington was asked to try to persuade Syria to drop its objections to Israel's attendance but declined.

It was recently disclosed that Syria refused to join the regional talks that are part of the peace conference format.

Some who helped with the water summit say it appears the State Department feared the summit would have exposed Syria's position on the peace conference talks prematurely.

The controversy over the meeting reflected the com-

Group says efforts on Mideast water will move ahead

By Carol Giacomo
Reuters

WASHINGTON — A group pushing for better development of water resources in the Middle East said it is still hoping to make progress even though a regional meeting it had organised on the issue was cancelled to avoid any conflict with the Madrid peace conference.

The so-called water summit was due to be hosted by Turkish President Turgut Ozal next week but officials feared it might interfere with the peace talks. The Madrid conference bringing together Israel and the Arabs opened Wednesday and water is among regional topics that could eventually be discussed.

Joyce Starr, who heads the Washington-based Global Water Summit Initiative, told Reuters in an interview that water is so scarce in the Mid-

die East and the pollution danger so critical that the drive cannot be allowed to lag.

Ms. Starr and her group have campaigned for three years to promote better management and development of water resources in the Middle East.

President Ozal was to have hosted the meeting in Istanbul from Nov. 3 to 9 and 22 countries were invited, with delegations led by ministers of agriculture, the environment, planning and water resources. The World Bank, a number of U.N. agencies and five U.S. agencies all pledged support, funding or both and there were also potential investors.

Ms. Starr said the meeting was cancelled earlier this month at the request of the United States, which had feared it might conflict with the Madrid conference. The

State Department, however, denied playing a role in the cancellation.

Ms. Starr said her efforts were not intended to conflict with the peace conference and were begun long before the United States launched its peace initiative. The conference was expected to go more deeply into the water problems that some fear could spark a new Middle East war.

With so much ground laid, "we are going forward with plans for technical meetings and investment studies," she said.

"Our goal is to create a water security framework for the region which is a multi-year, very long-range, process," she said. One major goal is to coordinate information about research and development of desalination projects.

"Today what is being done

in this area in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia may be unknown even here and what's being done in Israel may be unknown in Kuwait," she said.

Reflecting the political sensitivities of the region, Ms. Starr said governments will not be forced to deal with their adversaries and the emphasis on integrated water planning will be applied first within, not between, countries.

Her plan also includes educating youth on the environment, coordinating investment and a technical advisory group.

It has been reported that the water meeting would promote a water pipeline that Mr. Ozal saw as a catalyst for regional peace, but Ms. Starr said that was never part of the agenda.

The controversy over the meeting reflected the com-

China sold nuclear weapon know-how to Iran, officials inform U.S. committee

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — U.S. intelligence agencies have determined that China sold nuclear weapons technology to Iran despite repeated assurances that it would not export its nuclear know-how, administration officials have told a Senate panel.

"It appears that there is sale of some nuclear-related technologies" by the Chinese to Iran, Richard H. Solomon, an assistant secretary of state, said Wednesday.

Details of U.S. knowledge about the Chinese sale to Iran were secret, Mr. Solomon and a senior Pentagon official told the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

They declined to provide specifics such as what equipment or materials Iran bought from China, in what quantities and when the United States learned of it.

The Washington Post in Thursday editions quoted a well placed U.S. official as saying the U.S. intelligence community told the Bush administration that China was assisting Iran's nuclear effort before last summer when senior administration officials said there was no evidence of it.

The otherwise unnamed official said the reports of a growing nuclear connection had been circulated among policymakers for several years, the Post reported.

The subcommittee later held a closed-door session to question Mr. Solomon and other administration officials about classified details of the China-Iran deal.

Subcommittee Chairman Alan Cranston (Democrat, California), and other panel members pressed Mr. Solomon in response to a story in Wednesday's editions of the Post in which unidentified administration officials were quoted as saying Iran had paid China millions of dollars for devices, called calutrons, which can be used to produce highly enriched uranium for a nuclear bomb.

Calutrons were invented in the United States as part of the crash effort to build a nuclear bomb during World War II. Today they are considered a primitive technology, and they have no use other than in nuclear weapons development.

The Post said officials described the equipment purchased by Iran as similar to calutron devices discovered by United Nations inspectors in Iraq following the Gulf war. The inspectors have said documents found in Iraq indicate the Iraqis planned to use the calutrons to build nuclear bombs.

U.S. nuclear proliferation experts have speculated since the end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1988 that the Iranians might revitalise their quest for nuclear weapons. Just last week a senior Iranian government official said all Muslim states should obtain nuclear weapons to counter those believed held by Israel.

Mr. Solomon told the subcommittee's public hearing that administration officials had expressed concern to China about the nuclear deal with Iran. He stressed that other countries besides China may also be involved in aiding the Iranian programme.

"I suspect... we will find... that there are quite a few countries involved, not just China," Mr. Solomon said. He did not name any other possible participants.

Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Delaware, told Mr. Solomon that as recently as last summer the administration had denied it had any indications that China was aiding Iran's nuclear programme.

China said Thursday it was assisting Iran in developing nuclear energy for peaceful uses but denied reports it was helping Tehran produce nuclear weapons.

"China has cooperation with many countries, including Iran, in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear energy," Foreign Ministry spokesman Wu Jianmin told a weekly news briefing.

"China strictly follows three principles in its nuclear exports. First, it should only be used for peaceful purposes," he said.

"Secondly, China accepts the safeguards of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency). Thirdly, the recipient country should not transfer the nuclear technology to a third country without China's permission."

Mr. Wu declined to give details of the programme with Iran or to say whether the nuclear facilities there had undergone any IAEA checks.

Reports that Iran may be trying to use Chinese technology to produce nuclear weapons were "utterly groundless," he said.

Iran's mission at the United Nations has also denied the reports.

Iran seeks return of arms

A senior Iranian official is visiting Turkey with a message from Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to his counterpart Turgut Ozal for the release of a shipload of arms seized in the Bosphorus on Oct. 22. The semi-official Anatolia news agency said.

Ali Reza Moayeri, Mr. Rafsanjani's adviser on international affairs confirmed on arrival that the message concerned the return of confiscated weapons.

Greek Cypriot-registered vessel Cape Maleas was stopped in the Bosphorus by the Turkish coast guard after sailing from the Bulgarian port of Varna.

A search yielded heavy former Eastern bloc arms reportedly not registered in the cargo manifest. Turkish press reports said the arms, including grenade launchers and mortars, "were enough to equip two army corps."

Turkish officials later voiced suspicions that the cargo might be destined for a "terrorist organisation."

Although the suspect organisation was not named it was believed to be the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party fighting a separatist war in southeastern Turkey.

But Iran later claimed the cargo and protested its seizure. Despite repeated Iranian calls for the ship's release, Turkish authorities Wednesday "provisionally confiscated" Cape Maleas and its cargo after questioning its crew.

Iran frees Iraqi PoWs in goodwill gesture

BAGHDAD (R) — Iran has freed some 100 prisoners from its 1980-1988 war with Iraq as a sign of its "willingness to improve relations with Baghdad," an Iraqi parliamentarian said in remarks published Wednesday.

National Assembly member Abdul Wahab Hitti told the ruling Baath Party's newspaper, Al Thawra, that the releases followed parliamentary visit to Tehran on Oct. 19-22.

"We discussed ways of developing bilateral relations and the necessity of keeping in contact to solve all pending issues," Mr. Hitti told the newspaper.

Despite the ceasefire in their war, relations between the two neighbours remain tense.

Tehran's refusal to return the cream of the Iraqi airforce, which flew to Iran during the Gulf war, has not helped.

Red Cross sources say Iran still holds more than 30,000 Iraqi PoWs and Iran says they will be freed when Iraq releases captured Iranians. Baghdad denies it has any such prisoners.

Mr. Hitti said his delegation exchanged views with members of the Iranian Majlis (parliament) and invited them to Baghdad "to continue dialogue and talks on developing bilateral relations."

Iraq made major concessions on border disputes with Tehran at the outset of the Gulf crisis last year to free troops from its eastern borders for duty in the south. Iran was neutral in the conflict but relations have never been smooth.

Col. Qadhafi's brother-in-law Abdullah Senoussi is considered to be the number-two leader of Libya's intelligence services.

The other warrants are for Abdullah Al Razagh, a Libyan diplomat in Brazzaville, Congo, where the bomb was allegedly planted, and two intelligence agents identified as Mr. Naeli and Mr. Arbas.

In addition, investigating Judge Jean-Louis Bruguiere issued wanted notices for Libyan Vice-Foreign Minister Moussa Koussa and the number-three intelligence official, Abdul Salam Zaidan.

The criminal documents will be transmitted via Interpol to Libyan law enforcement authorities. No arrests or extraditions are expected.

Specific charges were not listed, but all warrants are issued in connection with the Sept. 19, 1989 bombing of the DC-10 jetliner over a wide track of the Niger desert.

The warrants come four days after French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas urged the 12-nation European Community to lift sanctions adopted against Libya in 1986 for sponsoring "international terrorism."

Mr. Dumas was joined by Italy, Portugal and Spain. The European countries were meeting with five North African countries, including Libya.

UTA Flight 772 had been flying from Brazzaville to Paris and had just completed a stopover in Ndjamena, Chad, when it was shattered by the explosion. There were no survivors.

Mr. Bruguiere, and anti-terrorism specialist, has spent the past two years examining the wreckage and circumstances surrounding the blast.

Last month, on the second anniversary of the explosion, Mr. Bruguiere showed families of the victims a film reconstructing what he believes to be the Libyan role in the explosion.

France issues warrant for Libyan officials

PARIS (AP) — A French judge issues international arrest warrants Wednesday against four Libyan officials, including Colonel Muammar Qadhafi's brother-in-law, for the bombing of a UTA jetliner over Niger in 1989 that killed 170 people.

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ANXIETY: Palestinian workers in a Jerusalem neighbourhood take time off to listen to radio broadcasting the Madrid peace conference

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U.N. chemical inspection team faces lethal hazards

WASHINGTON (R) — Iraq's main chemical weapons facility, rife with decaying and leaking chemical containers and unexploded shells, has been called the most dangerous place in the world.

The facility, called Muthana, is about 100 kilometres northwest of Baghdad. It poses a potentially lethal problem for United Nations teams sent to destroy Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

Unmarked tanks lie on the ground, oil drums are stacked three high, munitions are scattered around. A primary target for coalition bombers during the Gulf war, unexploded shells are scattered in and around the chemical agents and munitions.

"One of the chief inspectors in the first chemical weapons inspection called Muthana the most dangerous place in the world and there may be some truth to that," said Robert Gallucci, deputy chief of the U.N. team charged with inspection and destroying Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

"While everybody would accept that this is a dangerous thing to be engaged in... we have some rather unusual circumstances here," he said, while showing slides of the chemical weapons facility.

Mr. Gallucci spoke Monday at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies.

U.N. inspectors have found four times the amount of nerve gas and mustard gas Iraq had declared. The United Nations has ordered Iraq to destroy, remove or render harmless the chemical weapons, along with its nuclear, biological and ballistic weapons of mass destruction.

"The condition of these munitions and bulk (chemical) agents is not good. We have a substantial amount of leaking of (chemical) agent. The situation is not stable. It is not safe," he said.

Mr. Gallucci said he found it hard to believe, but Iraq had not marked its munitions. The teams had to guess whether they contained chemicals or conventional explosives or were empty.

Mistakes have been made. Iraqi officials once assured the team a pile of shells was filled with alcohol, and four containing nerve gas were mistakenly drilled for draining.

In another incident, an Iraqi soldier was overcome by the nerve gas sarin in the process of destroying it after the U.N. team had been assured that all the canisters were empty, Mr. Gallucci said.

In addition to Muthana, which has been chosen as the destruction site for Iraq's chemical arsenal, Mr. Gallucci said there are many dangerous storage sites around Iraq where filled munitions and chemical agents are stored.

"The quantity of munitions is truly extraordinary," he said. They found over 45,000 pieces of filled chemical munitions, 600 to 700 tonnes of agents contained in drums and hundreds of tonnes of precursor chemicals that are used to make chemical weapons that must be disposed of.

They also found 30 chemical weapons warheads which were capable of being fitted onto ballistic missiles, he said.

The present chemical inspection team is in Iraq for five weeks to inventory and assess the munitions and plan details of disposal. Mr. Gallucci said they have not chosen the method of disposal but expect to start the disposal early next year and complete it in one to two years.

"This is a case of supplies for a friendly country to whom we have special historic obligations," Mr. Glos said, referring to Bonn's support for Israel.

Hamburg prosecutors are pursuing a criminal investigation, based on suspected violations of Germany's weapons export laws.

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Hamburg port police discovered the equipment ready for loading onto an Israeli freighter and alerted prosecutors, who are investigating whether the case violated arms export laws.

Bonn reacted to news reports Monday by saying BND agents had organised the shipment at Mossad's request without informing the government or even BND Chief Konrad Porzner.

Mr. Porzner told parliament the decision on the shipment was made by a joint working group of mid-level officials from the BND and Defence Ministry.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Security tightened at Spanish Embassy

BEIRUT (R) — Police tightened security at the Spanish embassy in Beirut's eastern suburb of Hadeth Thursday after it was threatened by an anonymous telephone caller in connection with the Madrid peace talks. A police spokesman, who cannot be named in line with regulations, said a police force backed by an armoured personnel carrier was deployed near the entrance to the embassy early in the day. "We were informed that the Spanish embassy received a threat from an anonymous telephone caller in connection with the Madrid conference. We tightened security around the embassy in response," the spokesman said. The Spanish embassy withheld comment on the report. He said contacts were under way with other foreign embassies to "ensure if they want more security. The special (police) department in charge of providing diplomatic missions with protection has been reinforced," the spokesman said. The development came two days after a rocket was fired at the fence of the U.S. embassy in Beirut's northern suburb of Aukar. No casualties were reported. A previously unknown group, calling itself the Arab Revolutionary Faction, has claimed responsibility for the rocket attack in a telephone call to news offices in Beirut and said it was staged to underscore opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace talks in Madrid.

Syrians rebuff reporters from Israel

MADRID (AP) — Syria has spurned several requests for interviews from Israeli reporters, striking a discordant note at a conference where Arabs and Israelis mingled in unprecedented fashion. Two Israeli reporters said they were turned away by the Syrian delegation without explanation. A third said he managed to interview a Syrian journalist, but only on condition of anonymity. Israeli officials have granted interviews to several dozen reporters from Arab lands and from Arab media in Europe. One official was interviewed by Saudi Arabia's state television, which has always censored any positive mention of the Jewish state. A Syrian official, declaring "I have my orders," attempted to bar an Associated Press reporter from an informal briefing at the Syrian delegation press office. Ms. Sinal, who is based in Washington, had been issued credentials mistakenly saying she is based in Jerusalem. The official, who declined to provide his name, told another reporter the orders were not to allow Israelis into the Syrian delegation's press office.

U.S. bringing home armour from Saudi Arabia

LONDON (AP) — The United States has begun shipping home some armour equipment it had hoped to leave in Saudi Arabia as part of a bilateral prepositioning agreement, Jane's Defence Weekly reported. The magazine said in its Nov. 2 issue that the two nations had been unable to agree on prepositioning since the Gulf war ended in March. It said this was due to Saudi concerns about leaving a permanent U.S. ground presence there. It reported: "approximately one million tons of military equipment deployed for the war is still scheduled to be shipped back to the USA." It includes 1,300 tracked vehicles and 10,000 other vehicles. The former include M1, M1A1 and M60 tanks; Bradley fighting vehicles, M109 self-propelled howitzers, M88A1 medium recovery vehicles; M113 armoured personnel carriers, and M106 mortar carriers." The magazine, part of the Jane's publishing group whose annual volumes on fighting ships and other hardware are studied by defence forces around the world, gave no other details.

More oil wells to be controlled in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Only nine out of the hundreds of oil wells set ablaze or destroyed in the Gulf war remain to be brought under control, oil officials said Thursday. One official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said six of the wells were on fire and the remaining three were gushing oil and needed to be capped. "Firefighters hope to extinguish the last six fires today or tomorrow," said the official. "Then it should take them two or three days to cap them." He said a "ceremonial" well, Burgan 118, has been reignited and will be put out by the Kuwaiti firefighting team during a ceremony scheduled for next week the end of the firefighting effort. Kuwait's oil minister, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, is expected to turn the valve that will secure the well. Of Kuwait's 940 producing wells, 732 were damaged, including 640 set ablaze. Original estimates called for capping the wells by March 1992. The faster rate was attributed to an increase in the number of firefighting companies, the availability of needed equipment and support, the completion of the water system and the growing experience of firefighters. Kuwait currently is producing about 290,000 barrels of oil a day from 120 intact wells. Output is expected to rise to about 400,000 barrels a day by the year's end and one million by July 1992.

Saudis may stop aid to Afghan rebels

ISLAMABAD (R) — Saudi Arabia may stop military aid to Afghan rebels to go along with a decision by the Soviet Union and the United States to halt arms supplies to Afghanistan on Jan. 1, a senior Soviet diplomat said on Wednesday. The United States and the Soviet Union agreed last month to halt all arms supplies to both sides in the war to help promote a United Nations peace plan. The United States has been the main source of arms supplies for the Mujahideen guerrillas in the 13-year-old civil war. Moscow has backed the Kabul government. Saudi Arabia, another major source of military aid to the Mujahideen, and Pakistan, which served as conduit for supplies to the rebels, have not formally joined the U.S.-Soviet agreement. "The Saudis have indicated that they are willing to go along with the negative symmetry," the Soviet diplomat said. "But there are private channels for money over which they (Saudi government) have no control." A major portion of Saudi military help for the Mujahideen has been in cash. Recently, Saudi Arabia has given tanks, artillery and rockets captured from Iraq in the Gulf war. Saudi Ambassador Yusuf Mottabakani said in Islamabad on Wednesday that King Fahd had created a fund to rebuild areas destroyed by war, with an initial contribution of more than \$40 million. The official AFP news agency said. It was not immediately clear if the fund would be used by the guerrillas or channelled through a U.N. programme for Afghan reconstruction. Mr. Mottabakani gave Afghan rebel government President Shihabuddin Mojaddidi an additional 189 million rupees (\$7.7 million) for education facilities for refugee children in Pakistan, AFP said.

Lawyers want to exhume Kahane's body

NEW YORK (AP) — A lawyer for El Sayyid Nosair, the man charged with the shooting death of militant Rabbi Meir Kahane, said he has sent a pathologist to Israel to get the victim's body exhumed and perform an autopsy. Attorney William Kunstler said he sent Dr. Werner Spitz to Israel because only a detailed autopsy will reveal whether the wound allegedly inflicted by Nosair caused the rabbi's death. "Our doctors have told me the wound is not fatal," Kunstler said. Because Rabbi Kahane's family objected on religious grounds, city medical examiners did not do an invasive, comprehensive autopsy after the rabbi's death. Relying on an external autopsy, the medical examiner determined that the gunshot wound to the neck allegedly inflicted by Mr. Nosair killed Rabbi Kahane. In court papers, assistant district attorney William Greenbaum said "the deceased suffered one bullet passing through his neck and head, causing damage consistent with the fatal injuries described in the hospital reports." But defence lawyers said in the papers filed Tuesday that Rabbi Kahane was "not shot through the head, but in the left neck with the bullet exiting from the lower right cheek." It did not touch or even graze the brain pan. And, according to one forensic pathologist, might well have not been fatal if proper medical care had been provided or if the said victim had not been manhandling in the ambulance.